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The Week

THE BIG-NAVY forces have been thrown into something of a panic by the Shearer revelations. They and their methods have been publicly discredited on the eve of a five-power naval conference at which their ambitions are likely to receive a serious check. They have attempted to offset the effect of Shearer's activities by calling him a disreputable character; but obviously, only a disreputable character would do that sort of thing, and such a man would probably be more successful than one whose standards of conduct were higher. Absurd as were some of his pretenses to a wider influence than he possessed, the important and the sinister fact is that he was sent to Geneva by the shipbuilders, and kept there, in the belief that he had such influence as he boasted. That is what public opinion should remember—and so should the United States Senate, some of whose members are all too clearly anxious to hush up the whole thing and stop the investigation before anybody else gets hurt.

THE Hearst newspapers, the chief journalistic exponents of the big-navy program, have taken a characteristically disingenuous way of fighting the effect of Shearer. Why worry about what happened in Geneva, they say, when lobbyists have been guilty of such pernicious activity in Washington? There is ample ground, certainly, for investigating what the lobbyists have done in Washington; but there is ten times as much reason to find out how international relations have been affected. Those who interfere with domestic legislation, if they are successful, take some money from the pocket of the citizen; those who try, as Shearer tried, to prevent an amicable understanding between nations, are doing that which may not only take away a large part of the citizen's money, but perhaps his life and that of his son.

IF WE are to have a tariff at all, it ought to be flexible. Economic conditions change in regard to individual products, and it should be possible to alter one schedule without reopening the whole tariff question. The difficulty comes when we try to decide who shall have authority to make tariff changes. Under the present law, the Tariff Commission investigates, and recommends changes to the President, who has the power to put these changes into effect. There is a serious question whether this is not legislative action by the Executive; but in any case, as it operated under President Coolidge, the provision became little more than a joke. Since 1922 there have been thirty-seven changes, all but five of which have been increases. The five items on which reductions have been made are mill feeds, bobwhite quail, paint-brush handles, cresylic acid and phenol—none of them of any importance, while an enormous burden has been laid on the consumer by the increases. It is notorious that in most of the cases when the Tariff Commission recommended a decrease, President Coolidge put its advice into his pocket and let it stay there.

THE SO-CALLED flexible tariff provisions of the present law are bad enough, but those in the proposed tariff bill are even worse. As things now stand, the Tariff Commission at least goes through the motions of comparing the cost of production abroad with the cost in this country; but the new bill permits increases or decreases so as to equalize "the differences in conditions of competition in

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American markets" between goods manufactured at home and abroad. This might mean anything or nothing; it opens the doors to the most autocratic and far-reaching action on the part of the President. Mr. Hoover, we regret to state, has indicated that he thinks the flexible provision ought to be preserved, though without saying whether he prefers the old or the new sort of flexibility. These powers are too broad to be exercised by any President without congressional check. Senator Norris has suggested a simple amendment to the tariff bill which seems to solve the difficulty. The power to change rates would be taken away from the President and vested in Congress. The Tariff Commission would investigate and make recommendations as in the past, but submit these to Congress instead of to the White House. When such a proposed change was debated, discussion of any other schedule of the tariff law would be prohibited. This proposal would give us all the tariff flexibility that is needed.

SENATOR BINGHAM of Connecticut has been caught doing something very reprehensible indeed. He hired the assistant to the president of the Manufacturers' Association of Connecticut, putting this man on the government pay-roll, to help him prepare the textile schedules of the tariff bill. Connecticut, of course, is a state which produces textiles in large quantities, and the policy of the Manufacturers' Association would naturally be to get the tariff jacked up to the highest possible point. Senator Bingham's action is outrageous, and we hope he is properly spanked for it; but we cannot pretend that it is so unprecedented as some of the Washington despatches would imply. Everybody knows that lobbyists representing various manufacturing interests are the people who really write most of the schedules of the tariff bill. Senator Bingham's only innovation came in putting the lobbyist on the government pay-roll. The additional cost to the people through his salary was, after all, negligible compared to what other lobbyists are able to extort from the consumer through higher prices. It might even be a good idea to put all these gentry on Uncle Sam's pay-roll and see whether a little more concern for the plight of the plain people could not thereby be inculcated in their flinty breasts.

IT IS not often that a state Governor, in these shrill times of peace, is quoted by The New Republic except as a horrible example of rhetorical inanity or barefaced braggadocio. We do not mean to imply that there are no able and honest Governors in the United States: Governors Ritchie, Roosevelt, and the lamented Al Smith, to name only three, are shining examples to the contrary. But we have grown sadly accustomed, in the public speeches of our public men, to the stale and lukewarm platitudes which have taken the place of that vigorous turn for heretical generalities which used to mark the orations of our great elect. How refreshing it was, then, to read in the paper the other morning the statement which Governor Max Gardner of North Carolina gave out to the press. His words were the more extraordinary if it is remembered that North Carolina is at present the focus of the country's labor agitation. The general purport of his remarks was a rebuke to the reactionary textile industry of the state, and at the same time a condemnation of the Communist agitators. Among many other forthright assertions, the Governor said:

> We of course do not want general content or satisfaction with our industrial or economic arrangement. We do not want a complacency or a smug satisfaction. We do not want docile citizens or docile employees.

How now, citizens of North Carolina? Are these your sentiments? Or is your Governor, as we greatly fear, merely voicing his individual opinion —an opinion altogether too heretical for these out-of-joint times?

THOUGH on the whole one cannot quarrel with its decision, the report of the American Red Cross announcing that it will not participate in relieving the Chinese famine is a dreadful document. Its one cheering feature is the news that recent abundant rains in the famine area have helped the crops and rendered the situation somewhat less acute. For the rest, the Red Cross says bluntly that the destitution of 65,000,000 Chinese is "the cumulative result of chronic conditions of disorder, the crushing actions of the war lords, the depredations of bandits, the enforced payment of confiscatory taxation and the crippling, and consequent inability of the railroads to function beyond a fraction of their normal capacity." To these was added, says the report, a severe drought, which brought the whole to a tragic climax. Means of transportation are lacking, so that even if food were purchased and brought to the nearest railhead, it could not be distributed. Indeed, investigators for the Red Cross have seen grain, intended for the famine sufferers, rotting on the station platforms. The national government is criticized for its failure to take effective steps to cope with the situation. It issued bonds to the value of only $4,500,000, much of which, the Red Cross suggests, found its way into improper hands. Finally, the report points out that unless it is checked by famines, epidemics, and wars, the Chinese population will double in the next seventy years, although it is already too large for the Chinese land to support under any conditions than those of the most desperate and abject poverty. Here is a problem which we respectfully refer to Bishop Christopher E. Byrne of the Catholic Church, who on Monday of this week told the National Council of Catholic Women that birth control is "the detestable sin."

IN COMMENTING on the Shearer case, The New Republic has expressed the opinion that these disclosures merely emphasize the necessity of having all munitions, military supplies and equipment

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manufactured, as far as possible, in government navy yards and arsenals. We have also condemned the giving of "educational orders" to private manufacturers and the existence of "tentative contracts" with thousands of companies which would become operative on the outbreak of war. Our attention has been called to the fact that the program for "educational orders" desired by the War Department has failed to become a law. At present, though orders are given to private manufacturers, they are given out on the basis of competitive bidding in which the arsenals participate, and hence cannot always be parceled out to the precise factories which it is desired to "educate." There are no actual signed contracts between the government and private concerns covering war schedules of production; the situation as described by Secretary Dwight F. Davis in January, 1929, is that the requirements which could not be met by the arsenals, if a major war should break out, "have been allocated to commercial plants which have accepted schedules of production." Though these "allocations" and "acceptances" evidently do not constitute binding contracts, their moral effect must be much the same as if they did.

THE War Department and army authorities, very properly concentrating their attention on the task of getting into large-scale production of munitions as soon as possible on the outbreak of a possible war, argue not only that this program of procurement, with its mapping of the capacities of commercial industry and its tentative orders, is necessary, but that they should be allowed to supplement it by giving as many private firms as they can a little practice in manufacturing the supplies in question, even though arsenal production might be cheaper. There is something to be said for this position, and we need not assume that selfish or profit-making interests are mainly responsible for it. Nevertheless, even the most disinterested activities of the military occasionally need to be curbed in the interest of a major policy of peace. We may admit that the army needs to know where it could go for supplies in case of war, without allowing it to build up an active private interest in munition manufacture. And competent engineers are of the opinion that tiny driblets of "educational orders" would be of little value in preparing for a time of actual emergency. In any case, the arsenals must always be relied upon as the chief source of the designs, the practice and the directing personnel. Whatever virtue as a military measure the army-procurement program may have, we remain firmly of the opinion that at a time when no participation in a major war is even dimly in sight for the United States, that virtue should be sacrificed in so far as it is necessary to do so in order to concentrate on the manufacture of military supplies in government plants, and to avoid the creation of a hungry group of commercial industries depending in any material degree on the hope of governmental war orders. The army wants to manufacture in private plants even in cases where it costs more than in government plants; we should like to have it manufacture all war material in the public plants, even where private plants could bid lower.

THE school building program adopted this summer by Mount Vernon, N. Y., based on a survey by Miss Alice Barrows of the Bureau of Education at Washington, is an example of intelligent city planning worth the attention of many other small communities which are near large cities and therefore share the problem which faces Mount Vernon. That problem, as Miss Barrow analyzes it, can be reduced to two chief propositions: one, that Mount Vernon, directly in the path of the inundating tide of the New York City population and already strictly marked off laterally, is fated to expand horizontally; and second, that it is the school which must provide, for city children, the opportunities for the contacts with nature which not only give health, but provide the most important part of the educational process. By the Mount Vernon plan, which provides sites of five acres for each elementary school, the minimum play space for each child, allowing for a 54 percent increase in school attendance in the next ten years, will be 100 square feet. To rejoice because every child is to have 100 square feet of space may seem ironical. To the children who swarm the pavements of New York, so much space might seem great enough to get lost in.

England and America

THE visit of Ramsay MacDonald to the United States is an important event in the history of the two great English-speaking powers. This visit is not important because of any definite agreements at which the Prime Minister and the President will arrive; it is unlikely that they will accomplish much of this character and it is not even certain that it would be desirable for them to do so, as an alternative to the more democratic procedure of formal negotiations between carefully chosen bodies of delegates. Mr. MacDonald's visit is important rather as an indication of the friendly intentions and peaceful attitude of the Labor government of Great Britain. For the first time since the War, we have, on both sides of the Atlantic, governments headed by able men actuated by a powerful desire to come to an understanding and to work in harmony. That fact is of inestimable importance.

It is important for the reason that the relations between these two powers are gravely threatened at the present time. People are reluctant to talk about the causes of friction, or even to think about them, because a conflict between England and America would be a catastrophe so dreadful that, like superstitious savages, we feel we ought not to mention it, lest we should thereby in some degree

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help to bring it about. Nevertheless, the facts must be faced. The most powerful lesson from modern history is that peaceful relations between any two countries cannot exist unless definite and intelligent efforts are made to maintain them. The normal relationship in the modern world is one of hostility which at any time can flare up into war. Peace is an artificial product which, like the low temperature in an electric refrigerator, can only be preserved as long as energy is expended for that purpose.

We have heard a great deal of late about naval limitation—so much that many people doubtless believe that if an agreement can be attained on that question, all our troubles will be over. It is true that putting an end to naval rivalry would be an important achievement, though more for its psychological than for its practical value. It now seems likely that if an agreement is reached on the lines at present indicated, those who hoped for substantial reduction as well as limitation are due for a bitter disappointment. It is improbable that a settlement can be reached involving parity (a word which is meaningless for every practical purpose) without requiring the United States to build more cruisers than she wants. We must, however, face the fact that even with a satisfactory agreement on naval armament, there are still plenty of troubles ahead for a British-American understanding.

A naval agreement itself, even after it is successfully consummated, will remain a source of bitterness to many Englishmen. Great Britain has at last, however tardily and reluctantly, acknowledged the right of the United States to have a navy the equal of her own, not only as to battleships—which was conceded in 1921—but as to all other types of craft. On this side of the water, the sentiment most frequently heard is one of impatience that she should not have made this acknowledgment, and acted accordingly, long ago. When we remember, however, that Great Britain has been mistress of the seas since the days of Queen Elizabeth, and that every previous challenge to her complete supremacy has been answered by a war in which she has been victorious, we begin to realize the psychological shock which has been caused her people by the admission of the United States to a status of equality. It is true that our population is three times as large as that of the British Isles, that our material resources are much larger, and that our wealth is expanding at a rate unparalleled in all previous history; but none of these facts is of great importance compared with the emotional complex which every Englishman builds up from earliest childhood about Britannia, ruler of the waves. If we try to understand the mental processes of the English, instead of shutting our eyes and abusing them for following policies antipathetic to our own, we will not be surprised that the naval agreement, even if satisfactory to America and to all the more liberal elements in Great Britain, should be greeted by thousands of other persons in England with a resentment which will leave its mark on Anglo-American relations for years to come.

Another group of issues which will continue to exacerbate Anglo-American relations grows out of the late War. These items are too familiar to need more than brief mention here. The British feel that America "let them down" after the Armistice; that we turned away from European problems in violation of our unspoken pledges and of their definite expectations. Most of all, of course, they resent the collection of their war debt, despite the fact that the terms were voluntarily offered by their own spokesmen. They feel that their offer to forgive their Continental creditors should have brought a similar proposal from us—overlooking the fact that they are collecting, so to speak, on our behalf and that a double cancellation would mean no real loss to them, while it would to us. The British feeling about the war debt is not a logical one, but an emotional attitude, and it is for that very reason twice as hard to deal with.

There are other causes of friction growing out of recent history. The sinking of the "I'm Alone," and other incidents of the prohibition war, of the same character if not so severe; the rough treatment inflicted upon some English visitors, at Ellis Island; resentment over our tariff policy; amused contempt because of the "monkey trial" at Dayton, Tennessee; hostility aroused by our rigid immigration law—all these things go into the wrong side of the ledger when we cast up accounts. With the exception of the tariff policy, however, they may be taken as part of the normal history of the relationship between two great powers which are handicapped by the fact that they use approximately the same language and therefore find it easy to learn too much about each other. The most serious difficulties are as yet intangible; they lie in the future, and they may be predicted because of the diverging national policies of the two great imperial powers.

The United States is now the chief challenge to Great Britain in the markets of the world, as Germany was in the years before 1914. Our exports are increasing with great rapidity, and are now on a par with those of Great Britain. Our foreign investments, likewise, are growing at unexampled speed. Our demand for tropical and other raw materials from all parts of the world is larger than Great Britain's because of our much greater population. England and the United States are the chief competitors for the world's supply of petroleum, which, however enormous, is strictly limited and dwindling. Our new policy of subsidizing a merchant marine is likely to make us, in the course of the next two decades, an important competitor for the world's carrying trade.

Foreign investments and commerce have heretofore been for the United States a desirable but not an imperatively necessary addition to domestic enterprise; but this is not true of Great Britain. The agricultural resources of the British Isles, even

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If they were completely and skilfully utilized, could not support more than perhaps one-half of her population. The other half must be maintained by imported foodstuffs and these will continue to be imported only so long as she is able to send out manufactured goods (and coal) plus some invisible items in exchange. A cessation of, or even a serious diminution in, England's foreign trade would be a terrible catastrophe.

This is not yet true for the United States, but we are rapidly doing everything we can to put ourselves into England's predicament. Our population is still increasing, though less rapidly than most people suppose, and is slowly gaining on our production of food. Within two decades, we shall have ceased to export more foodstuffs than we import, and from then on, we shall be increasingly dependent on the sale of manufactured goods abroad in order to keep our population alive. Both Great Britain and the United States will then be feverishly seeking to sell abroad in the face of a market which, as things are going now, should be steadily declining in size. We may presume, it is true, a constantly rising scale of living in the so-called backward regions of the world to which such a large part of our exports go; but we must also assume an increasing ability in these countries to manufacture for the needs of their own populations. It is fair to expect, therefore, that Great Britain and the United States will be competing in the markets of the world for control of raw materials, for the sale of manufactured products, and for financial domination. Only one element in the wicked old formula will be lacking: rapidly expanding population. Great Britain has already reached a position where her population is stationary, and some authorities believe it is already declining. While the United States still shows a large excess of births over deaths, this gap is being narrowed, and it is safe to predict that within two decades our numbers will have ceased to expand except from immigration. It is not necessary, however, to have a surplus population in order to have rivalry between two great powers. Never in history have two leading countries stood face to face as Great Britain and the United States do, without recourse to war.

To say this is not to suggest that war is inevitable, but only that the preservation of peace is a difficult and complicated matter. The World Court, the League of Nations, even the Kellogg Pact, are important pieces of machinery working toward the desired end. It is probable that, before we are through, we shall need to go beyond them to activities in fields never before invaded except briefly and partially during the World War. If peace is to be kept we must remove the friction leading to war. British and American capitalists must learn to coöperate and not compete, in investing their surplus throughout the world. It will also be necessary to make some sort of allocation, however rough and general, of raw materials and of markets. These efforts will seem to many persons unendurably paternalistic; they will be tremendously difficult. Nevertheless, there is no escape from them if we want relations to rest upon a foundation of genuine harmony.

During Mr. MacDonald's visit, needless to say, only a small part of this list of questions can be discussed, and that part only in tentative fashion. These are matters which do not affect the two great English-speaking powers alone, but the rest of the world as well. Nevertheless, they must ultimately be discussed by England and America, which will have to take the lead in putting new arrangements into effect. This does not mean, as the French are saying so loudly nowadays, an Anglo-American entente; it means merely that these two powers have by pure accident drifted into a position where they must act together for the peace of the world or act against each other and destroy the peace. This is the situation which lends Mr. MacDonald's visit its real importance. The sort of negotiations which inevitably lie ahead for Great Britain and the United States can only be conducted in a friendly atmosphere. Mr. MacDonald is helping to set the stage for a drama of tremendous importance which sooner or later must be played out.

They Get Their Man

THE Pennsylvania State Police claim for themselves the reputation of never allowing a crime committed within their state to go unpunished. Like Scotland Yard and the Northwest Mounted, as known to readers of a certain type of fiction, they never forget, never relent, never fail to get their man. A reputation of this sort, if it is to serve its purpose, must be nourished and protected. It may be said for the Pennsylvania State Police that when it seems to them necessary that a punishment should be inflicted, they display some talent for finding a person on whom to inflict it. Consider, for example, the case of Salvatore Accorsi.

The case goes back to the Cheswick "riot" of more than two years ago. That story was told in Don Brown's article "So This Is America!" in The New Republic of October 12, 1927. It had to do with the breaking up by the State Police, on August 22, of a Sacco-Vanzetti protest meeting held on a private picnic ground and the scattering of the crowd by the explosion of tear-gas bombs and the swinging of clubs. Following their violent attack on the meeting, the police amused themselves for some time by harrying the neighborhood, cracking heads and chasing people to cover. Over two hundred persons were injured. Of the twenty-one individuals who were arrested on charges of "unlawful assembly, rioting, inciting to riot and resisting officers," thirteen were ultimately indicted but have never been brought to trial. No action was ever taken against the police for interfering with the right of assembly, or for their violence.

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The climax of that exciting day was reached when Trooper John J. Downey was shot dead—"in quelling a riot," as one of the Pittsburgh papers euphemistically put it. The shooting occurred about half an hour after the crowd had been scattered, at a point about a fifth of a mile from the scene of the meeting. One account related that Downey, encountering a man on a side road just off the state highway, began clubbing him—first across the knees, then over the head. Suddenly there were five revolver reports, and the officer lay dead with three bullet-wounds in his body. The man who shot him escaped without being recognized. Indeed, nobody but Downey had been near enough to see him clearly. Plainly, this was an affair which called, according to police standards, for the punishment of *somebody*. The police set out at once to get their man. They hunted over the entire region for weeks. The man they sought had disappeared so completely that it began to look as if the reputation of the State Police might suffer.

Salvatore Accorsi was living with his family at this time in the little mining town of Russelton, a mile or two from Cheswick. He remained there for about seven months after the death of Downey, living the humdrum life of a poor laborer. Wages were low and employment was irregular, so he decided in March, 1928, to move away and seek to earn a living elsewhere. His going apparently attracted no more attention than his staying had done—for the time being. But on June 13, 1929, he was arrested on Staten Island and lodged in Richmond County jail. He did not know then why he was arrested, but he was soon to learn.

Four days later, Trooper W. M. Brown arrived from Pennsylvania and claimed to identify Accorsi as the "same Salvatore Accorsi who on August 22, 1927, fired the shots which resulted in the death of John J. Downey at that place on that date." On June 18, Brown made an affidavit that he had identified Accorsi. On that affidavit and certain other papers of a technical nature, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania asked the Governor of New York to grant extradition. There had been no indictment. Accorsi's attorneys put up a long and interesting fight to prevent extradition, but there is no need of going into that here. The main point is that these attorneys were unwilling to see their client turned over to the State Police, to be held at their mercy in one of their barracks pending the finding of an indictment. Opposition to extradition came to an end when the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania on September 3 finally got around to indicting the man who had been held in prison without bail for nearly three months.

Brown's affidavit claims that he had recognized Accorsi in the Richmond County jail, but there is nothing anywhere to indicate that he had ever noticed the man before. Certainly neither he nor anybody else thought of connecting him with the killing of Downey during the seven months that he lived openly at Russelton after Downey's death. The original warrant for Accorsi's arrest was issued on the information of one John J. Tomak, also a trooper, who charged Accorsi with murder "on information received" and did not even pretend to have any first-hand knowledge of the facts. Is it possible that this information, sworn to about a year after Accorsi had moved from Russelton and a year and a half after Downey's death, resulted from the belated discovery that Accorsi had moved and might therefore be looked upon as a fugitive? Any fugitive would have his interesting side for a Pennsylvania State Policeman, especially at a time when the reputation of the constabulary seemed to be at stake. The New Republic has no desire to prejudice a pending court case, but certainly this one is of a type which deserves careful watching.

An Austrian Putsch?

THE tenth anniversary of the new Austria has not been the occasion of rejoicing. On the contrary, it has occasioned misgivings as to the integrity of the republic. For the last two or three years, sporadic clashes between extremists on the left and those on the right have occurred. On the eighteenth of last August, fighting broke out between the *Heimwehr* and the Socialist *Schutzbund* in the village of St. Lorenzen. From that incident down to the last few days, the reactionary elements back of the *Heimwehr* have been giving "last warnings" to the government, and have been proclaiming their intention to march on Vienna, as Mussolini and his black-shirted cohorts marched upon Rome a few years before.

Back of these clashes lie fundamental political divisions which have been produced in part by Austria's general economic condition. The country is divided into two groups, the first of which consists of the Socialists, who command 47 percent of the vote of the nation, and are in control of the city of Vienna. The second is a bloc of Catholics, Agrarians and Pan-Germans, which commands a bare majority of the seats in Parliament. It is another case of the city against the country; and in Austria the difference is intensified by the issue of clericalism. Dr. Seipel, the Jesuit priest who, until last April, was Chancellor, wishes to restore the former position of the Church in Austria; and his efforts have been bitterly resisted by the Socialists, who have attacked Catholic influence in the schools and are advocating cremation and divorce, both of which are forbidden to Catholics by canonical law. If there were a single majority party in Austria, the difficulties created by the existence of a strong minority of Socialists could be overcome. But there is merely a bloc majority, the exact composition of which is always uncertain, and the Socialists are strong enough to prevent any important change to which they are opposed. Neither group has been able to achieve its ends by parliamentary means; and both groups have therefore been incited to

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organize private armies. That of the Whites is called the *Heimwehr,* and that of the Socialists, the *Schutzbund.* For ten years, the government has tolerated the existence of these private armies, and it is these armies which have threatened to throw Austria into revolt during the past ten days. Under the Treaty of St. Germain, Austria is allowed to maintain a military force of only 30,000 soldiers; but the irregular troups are believed to include 150,000 to 200,000 men. Several years ago the Allied governments were much disturbed by the maintenance of a *Heimwehr* in Germany, on the ground that such a force was aimed at foreign foes. Only recently M. Briand protested to the League Council against the maintenance of similar organizations in Austria, but the objection in this case is rather domestic than international in nature. These armies are a financial and economic drain upon an already impoverished people; and as long as they exist, the country may overnight be thrown into internal turmoil.

In the years immediately following the end of the World War, the Socialists in Austria had the upper hand. Their present administration of the city of Vienna, especially their notable housing project, has attracted the attention of the outside world. But with the continuing deadlock in the government and the inability of Austria to rise above the tariff restrictions which her neighbors have imposed, the conservative elements have been growing in strength and in violence. The more extreme members of the *Heimwehr* have proclaimed themselves to be Fascists, and they have demanded a dictatorship. Some of them wish to achieve it by constitutional means. They have demanded the adoption of constitutional amendments, strengthening the powers of the President and the central government, installing the Fascist electoral system and depriving the Socialists of their present control over Vienna. Following another outburst of feeling, the Streeruwitz government announced on September 20 that it would support some of these amendments. But its failure to include the proposal to place Vienna under federal non-Socialist control displeased the Agrarian party, who demanded that the government resign—an ultimatum with which the government complied. The hotheads again shouted for the establishment of a dictatorship and the march on Vienna, but more conservative counsels prevailed. Johann Schober, the chief of police of Vienna, who has lived up to his reputation of being devoted to the interests of the Austrian state, was asked to form a government. Fascists who had expected to see him appoint a reactionary cabinet have been disappointed. As the inclusion of Dr. Hainisch as Minister of Commerce shows, the new government consists of republicans who will see to it that constitutional methods are followed. Herr Schober's first act was to confiscate the Communist organ, the *Rote Fahne,* for preaching revolt; on the same day he sent a battalion of troops to Moedling to prevent a *Heimwehr* march on the capital.

Had the attempt to establish a Fascist dictatorship in Austria been successful, the repercussions throughout Europe might have been disastrous. On the other hand, had the *Heimwehr* and the *Schutzbund* succeeded in throwing the country into civil war, Austria would probably have been pounced upon by greedy neighbors. It is possible that Germany, despite her delicate financial situation, would have come to her aid and the whole of Europe might have been brought to the verge of another war. For many years European politics has revolved around the Austrian question. The stability of this little country is essential to European peace. If this stability is to be achieved, the immediate duty of the government is to disarm the private armies which now roam through the land. But the permanent stability of Austria depends not so much upon domestic as upon international action.

At one time, Vienna was the capital of a country having a population of 29,000,000 people; today Vienna, consisting of 2,000,000 people, is the capital of a country of only 6,500,000. It is a huge head upon a tiny body. The new Austria has no minority problem; its population is now solidly German. But it has been deprived of markets; Austria today is largely dependent upon foreign sources of food supply. She has no coal; she has lost the Transylvanian grain fields; industries have been transferred to Czechoslovakia. Austria is a landlocked state. In 1922, the League of Nations saved her from complete collapse by means of financial aid. A League Commissioner-General reorganized the finances and restored the currency. The experiment was successful for the time being, and League control was withdrawn in 1926. Nevertheless, the fundamental economic difficulties remain. Some Austrians believe that the only solution lies in union with Germany, but this is blocked by the peace treaties. Others believe that the answer lies in a United States of Europe. Whatever form the political formula may take, it is certain that the tariff barriers which now obstruct Austrian trade must be torn down, if this country is to be free from constant internal turmoil.

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Paul Valéry[1]

PAUL VALERY was, in his twenties, one of the most serious and loyal disciples of Mallarmé. He was not, however particularly well known; he did not stand out among the other Symbolists. He wrote little at this time, and did not even collect his verses in a book. Nor would it be easy, from these early poems, to guess the future greatness of the poet. Today we are able to recognize in them the characteristic traits of the later Valéry—the preoccupation with method which makes him print two versions of the same sonnet and the peculiar confusion, in the uncompleted "Profusion du Soir," perhaps the most interesting of these early productions, by which the sunset which the poet is watching is assimilated so closely to his state of mind that it seems sometimes only a set of images for his complex of emotions and thoughts. But what, in general, we find in these poems is the purity, the blue-and-white, of Mallarmé, in a thinner diluted form. It would be impossible to foresee that their author would turn out to be Mallarmé's greatest disciple—a disciple who would surpass the master.

In his memoirs of Mallarmé, Paul Valéry writes:

> When I began to see Mallarmé, I had almost entirely lost my interest in literature. Reading and writing were becoming dull work for me, and I confess that they still bore me a little. The study of myself for its own sake, the comprehension of that attention itself and the desire to trace clearly for myself the nature of my own existence, almost never abandoned me. This secret disease alienates one from letters, despite the fact that it has its source in them.
>
> Mallarmé figured, however, in my private system as the representative of the most accomplished art, as the highest phase of the loftiest literary ambition. In a deep sense, I had his mind for a companion, and I hoped that, despite the difference in our ages, and the immense disparity of our gifts, the day would come when I should not be afraid to lay before him my difficulties and my special ideas. It was not in the least that he intimidated me, for no one was ever more kindly or more charmingly simple than he; but I felt, at that time, a sort of contrast between the practice of literature and the pursuit of a certain rigor and of a complete intellectual sincerity. The question is infinitely delicate. Should I attempt to induce Mallarmé to discuss it? I was fond of him and valued him above everybody, but I myself had renounced the adoration of that which he had adored all his life, and to which he had offered everything, and I could not bring myself to let him know it.
>
> I could, however, see no more genuine homage than to lay my thought before him, and to show him how much his researches, and the very fine and precise analysis from which they proceeded, had in my eyes transformed the literary problem and had led me to give up the game. The point was that Mallarmé's efforts, which were quite opposed to the doctrines and the aims of his contemporaries, were tending to regulate the whole domain of letters by the general consideration of forms. It is remarkable in the extreme that, through the thoroughgoing study of his art and with no scientific education, he should have arrived at a conception so abstract and so close to the most abstruse speculations of certain of the sciences. He never discussed his ideas except figuratively. Explaining anything explicitly was strangely repugnant to him. His profession, which he detested, counted for something in that aversion. But, in attempting to sum up to myself his tendencies, I allowed myself to formulate them in my own way. Ordinary literature seemed to me comparable to an *arithmetic,* that is to say, to an attempt to obtain particular results in which it was difficult to distinguish the principle from the example; but the kind of literature which he had conceived seemed to be analogous to an *algebra,* for it assumed the intention to emphasize, to conserve and to develop the forms of which language is capable.
>
> But, from the moment, I said to myself, that a principle has been recognized and grasped by someone, it is quite useless to waste one's time in applying it. . . .
>
> The day that I was a waiting never came.

Mallarmé died in 1898. Valéry had already ceased to write verse, and it was twenty years before he returned to it.

These twenty years were occupied strangely. The "study of oneself for its own sake, the comprehension of that attention itself and the desire to trace clearly for oneself the nature of one's own existence" seem to have occupied Valéry exclusively. It was during these years that Valéry wrote his "Introduction to the Method of Leonardo da Vinci" and invented his mythological character, M. Teste. Both Leonardo da Vinci and M. Teste (Mr. Head, it would appear, to Rabelais's Messer Gaster, Mr. Belly) are both, for Valéry, symbols of pure intellect, of the human consciousness turned in upon itself. The mind of Leonardo is something greater, something, to Valéry, infinitely more interesting, than any of the ways in which it manifests itself by taking action in particular fields —painting, writing, engineering or strategy. Action cramps and impoverishes the mind. For by itself, the mind is able to deal with an infinite number of possibilities—it is not constrained by the limitations of a field. The mind by itself is omnipotent. And consequently the method, the theory,

[1] This article is the third of a series, and is supposed to follow on "A Preface to Modern Literature" in the issue of March 20, and the article on William Butler Yeats in the issue of September 25. The other articles in the series will appear in early numbers of The New Republic.

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of doing anything is more interesting than the thing done. For the method may be applied so much more widely—may be universally applied. And when "a principle has been recognized and grasped," "it is quite useless to waste one's time applying it."

M. Teste, unlike Leonardo, declined to apply his method to anything. His whole existence is occupied in examining his own intellectual processes. He is a symbol of the intellect isolated from "all the opinions and intellectual habits which spring from the common life and our external relations with other men," and disembarrassed of "all the sentiments and ideas which are engendered or excited in man by his misfortunes and his fears, his terrors and his hopes; and not freely by his sheer observations upon the world and upon himself." M. Teste is, in fact, as his creator admits, a kind of monster. He has a sort of fascination; yet we resent him—he gives us the creeps. We sympathize with Mme. Teste, who is made uneasy by M. Teste's preoccupation, by his way of entering a room as if he did not see it, by his addressing her as "Being" or "Thing." Yet, though she fears him, though she does not understand him, she adores him—she does not envy other women who have married ordinary husbands. When he comes back from his meditations, he seizes sometimes brusquely upon her, as if with relief, appetite and surprise. He and she are indissolubly bound together.

At the end of twenty years, however, Valéry returns to writing verse. André Gide had finally persuaded him to allow his early poems to be collected and published, and he has had the idea of adding to them a new poem of from twenty-five to fifty lines —the last, perhaps, which he will ever write. But, in the meantime, during his period of retirement, his point of view has been profoundly modified—he has studied psychology, physiology, mathematics —he has become preoccupied with questions of method. "Twenty years without writing verse, without even attempting to write it, almost even without reading any! . . . Then, these problems presenting themselves again; and one's discovering that one did not know one's trade; that the little poems one had written long ago had evaded all the difficulties, suppressed what they did not know how to express; made use of an infantile language." For his new poem, he will impose upon himself "laws, constant requirements, *which constitute its true object*. It is an exercise, indeed—intended as such, and worked and reworked: a production entirely of deliberate effort; and then of a second deliberate effort, whose hard task is to mask the first. He who knows how to read me will read an autobiography, in the form. The *matter* is of small importance."

And the poem, which was to have filled but a page, occupies Valéry for four years and runs to five hundred and forty verses. At the last moment, when it is about to be printed (1917), Valéry finds for it the title, "La Jeune Parque." But, for all its grand manner and sonorous alexandrines, it is no conventional classical poem on a subject from Greek mythology. Is it the monologue of a young Fate, who has just been bitten by a snake? Is it the revery of the poet himself, awaking early one morning in bed and lying more or less awake till dawn? Is it a monologue of the human consciousness testing out all its limitations, exploring all its horizons: love, solitary thought, action, sleep, death?—the drama of the mind which would withdraw from the world and rise superior to it, but which is inevitably pulled back into life again and involved in the processes of nature? It is all of these—yet the various strata, "physical, psychological and esoteric," Francis de Miomandre says, are not overlaid one upon the other as in a conventional allegory or fable. They are confused and are always melting into one another—and it is this which makes the obscurity of the poem, as well as its fascination. This is a genre which has grown out of Symbolism, and which, so far as I know, does not precisely resemble anything ever attempted in literature before. Already, the mythological figures of Mallarmé—his Hérodiade and his Faun—had seemed less characters delivering dramatic monologues than great bubbles blown to show in rainbow-colors the thoughts and feelings of the poet's mood. And in "La Jeune Parque"—as in the mythological subjects, the Narcissus, the Pythoness, the Serpent, of the later poems which Valéry wrote during the rich period of poetic activity which followed immediately upon "La Jeune Parque"—he has carried this subtlety of conception, this complexity of presentation, even farther than Mallarmé.

For Paul Valéry, though he constantly recalls Mallarmé, has a more solid imagination and a more vigorous intellect. There is always something of the water-colorist about Mallarmé: he has his brightness and his relief, but they are the brightness and relief of little clouds—pink, purple and gray at sunrise or sunset, white at noon against summer blue. Valéry's palette is entirely different—it runs to effects less of color than of light: the silvery, the sunny, the somber, the translucent, the crystalline. If Mallarmé's poems have the charming hues of clouds melting and changing at sunset, some of Valéry's possess the density of cloud-shapes heavily massed: if they were not clouds, we should call them marmoreal. The lines of Valéry carry off with a resounding classical grandeur which reminds us of Alfred de Vigny, nuances, fluid waverings and uncertainties which have been learned from Mallarmé. If Mallarmé was to supply subjects for Debussy, Valéry, outliving Debussy's vogue, was to be inspired, in "La Jenue Parque," by Gluck.

And for all Valéry's insistence that, in his verse it is only the form, only the method, which interests him, there is more substance in his poetry than in Mallarmé's. There is a kind of drama going on in Valéry—a conflict between that part of man's existence which is represented by the abstraction of M. Teste and that part which is submerged in the

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sensations, the accidents, the exaltations and the disasters, of the quotidian world. If one were to read only M. Teste—though M. Teste is presented with some humor—or if one were to read only Valéry's own descriptions of what he is trying to do in his verse, one might take him for one of the dryest and one of the most relentlessly abstract of minds. But, though it is true that the point of view of M. Teste haunts the poetry of Valéry, as it predominates in his prose; though he appears to feel little interest in human beings, and in spite of the fact that none of his imaginary characters, though they have their own kind of passion and humor, is ever allowed to live his own life outside an intellectual world where at any moment he may appear as an abstraction; though the poet himself would even, in love, suspend sensual satisfaction and keep his mistress in the timeless imminence which for him is the true satisfaction—begging the woman in "La Pas" not to hasten, as he enjoys awaiting her as much as her kiss, and making his Serpent say to Eve, when she is on the point of tasting the fruit of the tree:

> Que si ta bouche fait un rêve,
> Cette soif qui songe à la sève
> Ce délice à demi futur,
> C'est l'éternité fondante, Eve!

though Valéry seems to admire women most when they are asleep, and have become, as in "Dormeuse," forms of pure abstraction, from which the personality has departed, so that he can reflect, as in "La Fausse Morte," that sleep is a kind of death "plus précieuse que la vie"—or when they are merely, as in "Intérieur," insubstantial transparent presences who pass before the eyes of the mind like glass before the beams of the sun; though he perhaps prefers to human beings in any state, or at least finds more completely satisfactory, marble columns or stately palms—none the less, there has perhaps never been a poet who felt the sensuous world more vividly than Valéry or who more solidly bodied it forth. In the reproduction, in beautiful verses, of shapes, sounds, effects of light and shadow, substances of fruit or of flesh, Valéry has never been surpassed. Of the summer cicada, he writes:

> L'insecte net gratte la sécheresse

of the cemetery by the sea:

> Où tant marbre est tremblant sur tant d'ombres

of the pool of Narcissus, when it is evening in the forest—"une tendre lueur d'heure ambiguë existe"—and the water is as smooth as a mirror:

> Onde déserte, et digne
> Sur son lustre, du lisse effacement d'un cygne

of a rough sea:

> Si l'âme intense souffle, et renfle furibonde
> L'onde abrupte sur l'onde abbatue, et si l'onde
> Au cap tonne, immolant un monstre de candeur,
> Et vient des hautes mers vomir la profondeur
> Sur ce roc" . . .

His human figures are like fine statues which have yet a vibrancy and a soft envelopment. The Serpent makes us see Eve as he speaks to her:

> Calme, claire, de charmes lourde,
> Je dominais furtivement,
> L'oeil dans l'or ardent de ta laine,
> Ta nuque énigmatique et pleine
> Des secrets de ton mouvement!

and later, when she is tempted:

> Le marbre aspire, l'or se cambre!
> Ces blondes bases d'ombre et d'ambre
> Tremblent au bord du mouvement!

And in one marvelous line of "Dormeuse," he brings a whole recumbent figure before us:

> Ta forme au ventre pur qu'un bras fluide drape.

The opposition between a thirst for abstraction and a lively perception of the tangible world—the absolute and independent laws of the mind and the limiting contingencies of human life: opposites impossible to dissociate from one another—this contrast, and the conflict which it implies, are the real subject of Valéry's poems. Rather an unpromising subject, one might suppose—one, at any rate, entirely remote from the emotions of romantic poetry. Yet it is a subject which has inspired Paul Valéry to some of the most original poetry ever written, to some of the indubitably great poetry of our time. We may take as an example of Valéry at his best his most popular and perhaps most satisfactory poem, written at the time when, after his long inactivity, he was returning to literature, "Le Cimetière Marin." Here the poet is beside a graveyard by the sea, when the sun, at noon, seems to be standing still and when the water is as level as a roof on which the boats look like doves walking. The external world, for the moment, is like that absolute toward which Valéry is always turning, with which he has been for so many years obsessed. Yet, "O Noonday!" he cries, "for all your immobility, I am the secret change in you—I am the flaw in your great diamond!"—But the dead, there below, they have gone to join the void—they have become a part of inanimate nature. And suppose he himself, the living man, has, alive, merely the illusion of movement—like the runner or the arrow of Zeno's paradoxes?—"But no!" he exhorts himself. "Break up that brooding, that immobility which has all but absorbed you!" The salt wind is already coming up to break the tranquil roof of the sea, and to dash it against the rocks. The world enters into movement again and the poet must go back to life!

It is quite impossible in other language, however, to provide a scenario for one of Valéry's poems: in

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doing so, one must leave out almost all that is most characteristic of Valéry. In trying to clear up his meaning, one clears it up too much. There are no real ideas, no real general reflections, in such a poem as "Le Cimetière Marin": Valéry presents, even more completely than Yeats in such a poem as the one I discussed in my last article, "Among School Children," the emotion merged with the idea and both embedded in the scene where they occur. It is the aim and the triumph of the Symbolist poet to make the stabilities of the external world answer to the individual's varying apprehension of them. It is, indeed, his effect, if not his purpose, to lead us to question the traditional dualism which would make them out to be two separate things. In such a poem as "Le Cimetière Marin," there is no simple second meaning: there is a marvelously close reproduction of the very complex and continually changing relation of human consciousness to the things of which it is conscious. The noonday is inorganic Nature, but it is also the absolute in the poet's mind, it is also his twenty years of inaction—and it is also merely the noonday itself, which in a moment will no longer exist, which will be no longer either tranquil or noon. And the sea, which, during those moments of calm, forms a part of that great diamond of Nature in which the poet finds himself the single blemish, because the single change, is also the image of the poet's silence, which in a moment, as the wind comes up to lash the sea, will give way to a sudden gust of utterance, the utterance of the poem itself. World and poet are always overlapping, are always interpenetrating. But how?—it is not the poet's task to answer—it is his task merely to reproduce, to reconstruct, in the materials of his craft, his intense moment of consciousness.

II

Since "Charmes" (1922), Paul Valéry has published no more poetry, but a great deal of miscellaneous prose. Valéry's prose, in spite of the extravagant respect with which it is treated by his admirers, is by no means so remarkable as his verse. In the first place, it seems to me that Valéry has never really mastered a prose style. His prose has virtues of terseness, tightness, wit, but it is usually much too difficult to read and often very obscure. The tricks of style—the ellipses and inversions—which are effective in Valéry's verse, in his prose become exasperating. This difficulty is usually attributed by Valéry's eulogists to the profundity of the ideas he is trying to express, and Valéry himself seems not unwilling to acquiesce in this view. But it is certainly not true that profound ideas necessarily involve the viscous sentences, the hindside-foremost presentation of thought and the clogged abstractions of Valéry's essays. We find him writing of Leonardo, for example:

> En bouquets formidables, si sa main figure les péripéties des attaques qu'il combine, se décrivent les trajectoires de milliers de boulets écrasant les ravelins de cités et de places, à peine construites par lui dans tous leurs détails, et fortifiées.

Here there is nothing profound about the thought: the artificiality of the order, which might conceivably be effective in verse, is here unnecessary and confusing. It is true that this sentence occurs in an early essay, and that Valéry probably, on the whole, writes better today. But let me quote a passage almost at random—it is by no means one of the worst—from a recent paper on Montesquieu:

> La vie du peuple organisé est tissue de liens multipliés dont la plupart passent dans l'histoire et ne se nouent que dans les temps les plus antiques par des circonstances qui ne se reverront jamais. Personne n'en sait plus les parcours et n'en peut suivre les commandes.

Do we not have to read this twice to attach the *en* to the *liens multipliés*? Has not Valéry here sacrificed lucidity to the desire to produce an effect of terseness, of rigor?

For Valéry is always insisting on "rigor"— and he has done so to such good purpose as to convince many people that he is a great thinker. Yet the rigor of his prose is largely an artistic effect, produced like the artistic effects of his poetry. I cannot see that Valéry is particularly successful either in thinking or in expressing himself clearly. He is always telling us how difficult it is going to be to make us understand this or that, and then the portentous thought, when it comes, is as likely as not to turn out to be one of the commonplaces of modern philosophy—the sort of idea, for example, which Mr. J. W. N. Sullivan has no difficulty in making intelligible in the short popular essays of his "Aspects of Science"—and the difficulty is seen largely to consist in the fact that Valéry, by a succession, say, of verbs or a catalogue of nouns of excessively abstract appearance, has befogged us with a variety of metaphors, as if he were writing a symbolist poem. It is therefore a little difficult to know how to judge the value of these essays. They are almost always interesting, if we can get through them—they almost always contain a certain number of suggestive observations pungently expressed. When Paul Valéry writes about literature, it is with the insight of an artist—when he writes about contemporary affairs, as in the admirable essay "La Crise de l'Esprit," it is with the wide view and the freedom from prejudice of a citizen of the world. But most of the time he is merely M. Teste, scrutinizing his own intellectual processes, and coining metaphors to describe what he finds. This occupation has its own sort of interest; but M. Teste, in the long run, becomes dreary. What, we ask, has he succeeded in dredging up from that abysmal self-scrutiny of his? Why, simply the discovery that all forms of intellectual activity—even those which seem on the sur-

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face very different, such as poetry and mathematics —are fundamentally the same sort of thing, merely arrangements or organizations of selected elements of experience—something which we had supposed was pretty generally known. Paul Valéry appears, in his prose, as a sort of super-dilettante, who sometimes hits on a valuable idea but who not infrequently, with groans of heavy labor, unloads a ponderous, obvious conclusion. M. Teste, for all his passion for method, seems to have taken singularly little trouble to order or sort out his ideas: he does not, in fact, often undertake anything describable as exposition; but rather attempts, in a dark and special language, simply to communicate intellectual sensations. He is, in fact, in his fashion, a poet.

It is worth while to quote from Valéry's "Introduction to the Method of Leonardo da Vinci" his definition of a work of art as "a machine intended to excite and combine the individual formations" of a particular "category of minds." This definition, written in 1894, already implies the anti-romantic attitude which has come to play so influential a role in literary criticism since the War. A poem, for Valéry, is not emotion, not self-expression, not a gushing forth of song, as the romantics tended to regard it; it is a complicated intellectual problem, a struggle with self-imposed conditions—it is, above all, something *constructed*. A poem, says Valéry, is like a heavy weight which the poet has carried up bit by bit to the top of a roof: the reader is the passer-by upon whom the weight is made to fall and who consequently receives from it, in a moment, such an overwhelming impression as the poet himself has never known. "Enthusiasm," says Valéry, "is not a state of mind of an artist."

Valéry occupies in France today a position of acknowledged mastery and authority somewhat similar to that of Yeats. Like Yeats, he has succeeded in maintaining a pecular chastity, sobriety and dignity, undisturbed by the tumult and medley about him. His poetry, like Yeats's, comes out of a conflict between the desire for pure contemplation and the necessity for participating in life. Valéry even approaches, in one passage, the Yeatsian conception of the Mask or Anti-Self, which it is the business of the poet to create: "True beauty," Eupalinos, the architect, is made to say in one of Valéry's Socratic dialogues, "is precisely as rare as that man is rare among men who is capable of exerting himself against himself—that is to say, of choosing a certain self, and of imposing it upon himself." And again: "The capital work of an artist is the artist himself—whose successive works as they come from his hands, productions realized and accessible to everybody, are only the means and the external effects—sometimes accidental ones. The artist, then, the capital production, the unique and secret production, fashions and models himself out of himself little by little, deciphers and recognizes himself—and becomes a new man: he who is able to do at last that which he alone can do." I have pointed out the kinship between such a poem as Valéry's "Cimetière Marin" and Yeats's "Among School Children"; and one would hardly know to what to compare such a metaphysical lyric as Yeats's lovely poem which begins,

> A woman's beauty is like a white
> Frail bird, like a white sea-bird alone. . .

unless to certain poems of Valéry's.

Valéry's immense prestige and reputation, which have come to him late in life, are not without their tiresome aspect. A great poet, he is taken by his devotees a little too solemnly—and perhaps takes himself a little too solemnly—as a univeral sage. A good deal of what Valéry publishes is published only at excessively high prices in editions so rigorously limited as practically never to circulate at all. The last book of his I have succeeded in obtaining, the very interesting collection of essays (some, however, already published in "Variété") called "Poésie," is imported at the price of twenty dollars and printed on such large, thick special paper that it is as heavy as a "Who's Who" and extremely cumbersome to handle. It is illustrated with eight reproductions of very indifferent etchings by Valéry himself which have no relation whatever to the text except in so far as they tend to represent Valéry's general state of mind by portraying a single solitary figure, dimly working at a desk with his back to us or simply lying in bed all alone. Valéry is a good deal occupied in these essays with explaining to us what superhuman labor it costs him to compose his poetry and intimating that, in comparison with this poetry, most of the productions of other writers are facile and superficial; and we get rather tired of hearing about this—especially when we remember his replying to a correspondent who had ventured to complain of some awkward inversion in "La Jeune Parque" that the correspondent had happened to hit precisely upon one of the passages in the poem which Valéry had "literally improvised in the hasty lassitude of finishing it up." I have written elsewhere in these pages of the rather peevish and ill-mannered speech on Anatole France which he delivered in the French Academy on the occasion of succeeding to France's seat; and it is reported that Valéry, when he was elected to the Academy, had made for himself by a fashionable tailor a special Academician's uniform—to the astonishment of the other Academicians, who had been in the habit of fitting themselves as best they could —as college graduates rent old graduation gowns, on the occasion of commencement exercises—from among a closetful of venerable uniforms passed on from Academician to Academincian, no doubt since the time of Richelieu.

Yet if it is true that Paul Valéry today has a little of the arrogance, the superior pose, of the man who has never made a profession of letters, whose personal interests are not too intimately bound up with any department of intellectual activity—he has, at the same time, the special value of such a

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man. There is perhaps a little of snobbery, of pose, in Valéry's constant deprecation of literature—in his slightly condescending air, for example, even in writing for an "hommage" to Proust—only a single volume of whom, he says, he has had the leisure to look into, adding casually that the art of the novelist is almost inconceivable to him. But Valéry has shown himself, as a critic, remarkably searching, independent and honest. His general skepticism, his refusal to be imposed upon by literary and intellectual conventions, his instinct to cut below all these conventions and expose the dubious assumptions on which we base them—makes him a stimulating and original figure. "Stupidity is not my forte," he says. We should perhaps prefer not to hear him say it, but it is true. And when he turns traitor in the camp of literature, his observations are perhaps most salutary. "Genius," he writes, "is a habit which certain people acquire." And "X wants us to believe that a metaphor is a communication from Heaven. A metaphor is what occurs when one looks at things in a certain way, as being dazzled is what occurs when one looks into a sun. When one looks at things in what way? You feel it, and some day it will perhaps be possible to explain it in the most precise terms. Do this and that—and you have all the metaphors in the world." It is only the first-rate man who is able to do without illusions in regard to the profession which he practises.

EDMUND WILSON.

A Nation of Realtors

MR. NATHAN WILLIAM MACCHESNEY, General Counsel of the National Association of Real Estate Boards, has unwittingly rendered service to students of American civilization in an open letter intended to define the "true and strict meaning of the term 'Realtor.' "

> The term has an ethical content and has come to symbolize the effort that is being made by the National Association to raise the standards, throughout this country and Canada, of the real estate brokerage business. Tremendous progress has been made in this respect and a great deal if not most of it is due to the effectiveness and value of the term "Realtor" in symbolizing this effort.

Mr. MacChesney's interest in ethics and lexicography is not wholly disinterested, for it seems that he wishes to monopolize the term as a trade name for the members of his association. The attempted restriction only calls attention to the truly national scope and application of a word which contains in itself a significant interpretation of American society. In this country all men are realtors. As the prime symbol of our civilization neither the pilgrim father, nor the pioneer, nor the captain of industry, suffices so well as the real estate man to explain certain habits of mind, certain ideals and certain inconsistencies of the behavior of the American people.

Unfortunately for better understanding between Europe and America, however, our real estate business is a unique development in world civilization. Visitors from abroad miss its significance because they know nothing like it at home. There are lawyers in Paris who will supervise the transfer of real property; there are steamship runners in Italy who will organize a company of emigrants for settlement in the Argentine; there are promoters who will raise capital for a plantation venture in the tropics. But these activities bear nothing more than a superficial resemblance to American real estate enterprise.

If the American people winced when the foibles of Babbitt were exposed, it was because they saw themselves so justly portrayed in the character of this super-real estate man. This realtor is no quaint, provincial type, like Riley's Hoosier, Elsie Singmaster's Pennsylvania Dutch, or Irvin Cobb's Judge Priest. He is a universal American. To the same degree that poets, soldiers, and philosophers made the German nation, or just as it can be said that merchants and seamen have imposed the stamp of their mentality upon the English, so the realtor has impressed his point of view upon America.

The English colonies in America were from the very start real estate promotion ventures. In this they differed from most other colonies, such as the Spanish or East Indian, which depended upon exploiting native populations rather than upon increasing land values by means of immigrant populations. As the economist can easily explain, land settlement under conditions of private ownership and freedom of exchange produce a kind of return which differs from the reward of industry and other productive enterprise. When population increases, the value of land goes up. When the increase of population is rapid, the value of the land may double or quadruple in a few years.

This impressive peculiarity of real estate economics has been taught to America for generations. The man of today will often think wistfully of the wealth he might be enjoying if only his grandpa had held on to the land he once owned, or bought land at the price for which it was then selling. In most cities and towns of America it is a matter of common knowledge and private remorse that the whole downtown district was once a farm which could have been bought for $10 an acre, or that the block upon which the First National Bank

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now stands was sold for $200 only thirty years ago. Such increases in land value have been an economic barometer in the making of America. When the wilderness becomes farm or summer resort, or the town becomes an industrial center, the increased price of land and the growth of the nation are but two sides of the same thing.

The New England historians, with their cult of the Pilgrim Fathers, have misled us as to the true character of American origins. In the seventeenth century, Puritan influence was dominant in certain parts of Europe and in certain of the colonies in America. Puritanism was common to both continents, and was paramount in neither. It belongs rather to the history of the century than to the history of any particular place. In the eighteenth century, Puritanism was on the wane on both sides of the Atlantic. It survived longer in Scotland and Holland than in New England; and by the time of the American Revolution lawyers, editors and merchants were supplanting ministers as community leaders, even in Massachusetts. During the nineteenth century, the old type of Puritan minister became extinct in this country. The intellectual leaders of New England went Unitarian. If you were to seek today for a man like Jonathan Edwards or Cotton Mather, strictly moral, unemotional, well educated, deeply engaged in dogmatic subleties, you would find him in Scotland or in Holland, but not in America. There is nothing distinctively American about a Pilgrim Father. He belongs to his age alone. But with the real estate man it is otherwise.

For the principles of the real estate business have impressed themselves upon all the generations of Americans. Land development and speculation appealed alike to the Anglicans of Virginia and the Congregationalists of Massachusetts. The economic laws relating to real estate values operated as effectively on the Ohio as on the Hudson. The lure of increased land values has been equally potent along a Western frontier and in the downtown district of an Eastern metropolis. All classes of people interest themselves in the business; there are no guild secrets. If a railway line is surveyed or a bridge is built, the soda jerker and farm hands realize as quickly as the secretary of the Chamber of Commerce that land values will be affected thereby. Anyone who has a little money is a potential purchaser of land; any land-owner is willing to sell if he can get his price. In England, they buy land for social prestige, and in some parts of Europe they never sell land at all, but in this country the speculative buying and selling of land is universal.

Thus it comes about that the probability of a population increase has always been a staple article of American commerce. Everyone realizes that in land booms and promotion schemes the thing one buys is not so much the land itself as the expectation that there will be an increased population on the land. Optimism and hope are thus turned into hard cash, as if they were substantial commodities. What is more natural than that a people bred to this business should entertain strange notions of the meaning of ideal things?

In their community life the American people accept the postulates of the real estate business. They recognize that the creation of this marketable idea, this saleable faith, is the first object of community enterprise. It is a duty of every citizen to boost the community. The little children sing a song with the refrain, "Be a booster, be a booster"; the slogan, "Boost, don't knock," hangs over the desks of half the members of the Chamber of Commerce. The editors of the local papers are always writing about the difference between constructive criticism, which they welcome, and destructive criticism, which they deplore. All dreams look to the future—to a future that is to be both bigger and better. The foreigner takes this as a naïve and superficial habit of boastfulness. Actually, it is an attitude which has deep institutional roots in American life.

The pervasiveness of regimented boasting as a feature of American life is well illustrated in our college society. Here there are gathered together those chosen ones to whom we are granting four years of respite from the noise of a workaday world in order that they may learn to see things under the aspect of eternity. They create their own social order, with their organization politics, their student activites, their schedule of social functions. And then as the supreme symbol of their college life, the vehicle of their most ardent enthusiasm, the focus of their most richly ingenious intelligence, they create the Big Game Cheering Section—a potent ritual of organized self-praise.

A far more mischievous consequence of the general acceptance of the postulates of the real estate trade rests on this: that the virtue of minding one's own business is overshadowed by the virtue of protecting and boosting real estate values. If my neighbor's front yard is littered with trash, the value of my property is lowered thereby. This reflection would not come to the mind of a French or German villager, who accepts the value of his house and garden as something not lightly subject to change. The Englishman's house is his castle, but the American is never safe from the interested pressure of his neighbors who demand that he conform. "It is a disgrace the way Jones lets his grass grow in his front yard. It spoils the looks of the whole block. Somebody ought to speak to him about it." Such a comment as this is not merely gossip about one's neighbors; it is the expression of a peculiar and often pernicious attitude toward the neighbor. An English reviewer remarked not long ago that he often wondered what it was about an American small town that made all the American writers hate it with such fiendish bitterness. He could easily understand the intensive gossip that is common to all small

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communities, and the type of religious intolerance which is exemplified in many chapters of European history and in our own trial at Dayton, but this species of intolerance and oppression, which has its roots in the real estate business, was beyond his imagination and experience.

Another significant element of the realtor's *Weltanschauung* is a passionate faith in progress. Progress as such is not essential to the satisfactory conduct of industry, commerce, or agriculture. The man with a good business in these lines is often fearful of change. The invention of new machinery and methods is often destructive of vested economic interests. Many useful patents are bought up by manufacturers who wish to suppress them in order to protect themselves against expensive changes in plant and in equipment. Conservatism is a byword of established banking and commercial interests. In real estate trading, however, the expectation that the future will be very much better than the present is the essential condition of all profitable activity. The idea of progress which European intellectuals grasp in a philosophical setting, and which the European masses understand in a Marxian sense, is understood in America as the realtor's boisterous confidence in indiscriminate material betterment, increase, and growth.

An eminent psychologist has suggested that an indication of our general preoccupation with real estate values can be seen in the unconscious testimony of our patriotic songs. The state songs and the songs sung by high school children in praise of their community are almost rigorous in their devotion to the attractions and resources of the region. The subject matter of these songs is often identical with the subject matter of the illustrated propaganda issued by the local Chamber of Commerce. There is a song about Manteca, California, which in a single stanza mentions (not without some straining of the meter) butter, dairy products, walnuts, prunes and raisins fine. Even our national songs contain lines written in the same vein. There are "thy rocks and rills, thy woods and templed hills" in one hymn, while another begins quite frankly:

> Oh, beautiful for spacious skies, for amber fields of grain,
> For purple mountain majesties above the fruited plain.

We have only to compare the treatment of real estate features in these songs with the total neglect of such subject matter in "God Save the King," "Rule Britannia," "Marseillaise," "Deutschland über Alles," "Die Wacht am Rhein," or "Brabançonne," to realize how unconscious and yet pervasive among us this interest in real estate may be.

Just as the community participates in real estate activity through the institutions of coöperative boosting and inquisitorial supervision by neighbors, so the individual enters into the scheme through his ambition to own a home. To own a home is the socially approved aim of every family. Around this ambition there takes shape again that characteristic mingling of sentiment and business. "Let this place be home sweet home for you" runs the realtor's sign along the highway. Real estate agents as a class are likely to become almost tearful in their feeling for the sacred ties of domestic affection which spring from the owning of a home. Note for example this touching tribute to the home from the Real Estate Section of a metropolitan newspaper:[1]

VALUE OF HOMES

Best Expression Found in Ideals of True Family Life

> Seventy-five homes are completed every day in the year for happy owners through the assistance of New York State Savings and Loan Associations, according to George A. Plant. . . . This means housing of 23,000 families, or approximately 110,000 people, in a single year.
>
> "The American home is the institution," said Mr. Plant, "to which we need to give a generous share of attention. Its influence is widespread and its effects can be directly traced upon the nation.
>
> "Home, however, has a still deeper significance which any amount of gold cannot substitute. Its real protection is the true ideal, a priceless gift which can never be destroyed but rather finds expression in each individual member, and is carried out through the various avenues into the world, where it continues to work for good."

We recognize in these utterances the standard patter of the real estate business. Although we may notice a few grammatical errors and a total lack of meaning, we do not judge the speaker harshly. A European visitor, unfamiliar with the tradition of real estate enterprise, might think this spokesman of the building and loan associations a hypocrite talking about ideals when he is thinking of profits. But we see deeper.

This man is the brother of every American. He makes that characteristic combination of definitely known practical fact with vaguely felt and distant ideal. He knows exactly how much business his organization does, and he also feels that "the true ideal" will "continue to work for good." He is both prophet and business man. A people who do business with prophets like Mr. Plant will find themselves going to war for prophets like Woodrow Wilson. And when they do so go to war, their enemies call them a nation of dollar worshippers, their allies hail them as a nation of idealists. It occurs to no one to interpret them as a nation of realtors.

Robert C. Binkley.

[1] New York Times, May 28, 1928.

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THREE POEMS

Against Heaven

The flesh cries out, but no one hears
Save death, the deep root, and the stone.
The flesh cries out for quiet ground,
But it is stitched upon the bone

And grafted to the evil brain
That drives it East and drives it West.
The flesh turns; it would go home,
But by man's law it may not rest

But must be lashed until it cease
To dream of rich dust whence it came;
Whipped and torn, still must it climb
Skyward to placate a Name.

Bent like any slave, it bears
Its bitter load of heavenly sweat,
And hears like any slave the sound
Of music it cannot forget,

The trumpets of the ground, the bells
That ring in silver sinking water.
The flesh turns; it would go home:
Earth, the mother, calls her daughter.

Fighting the poison of the brain,
The drug of immortality,
The flesh calls to her ally Death
To battle with eternity.

Wrapped in roots, pillowed on stone,
Until Death to guard at her pale side,
The undefeated flesh returns
To her own place, undefied.

HAROLD LEWIS COOK.

One Beauty Still

One beauty still is faultless, not
Deflowered in the bed of thought:
It is a sound of sunken seas.
It is an avid wish for ease.
It is the earth, it is the sky,
When passion is a lute put by
And life a dancer out of breath.
It is the lovely face of death,
Adored and guessed at; never once
Beheld in chrysoprase or bronze——
Not in the temple or the grove,
Not in a hundred nights of love.

This was the morning sun, the wild
Daybreak of anguish in the child.
This is the sun at noon no less,
Deep in the dome of nothingness.
Wherefore, impoverished heart, be proud
To wear the purple of the shroud.
If you are friendless, take for friend
The noble wave, the affluent wind.
If you are homeless, do not care:
Inhabit the bright house of air.
If you are worn with wayfaring,
Lie down within the arms of spring.

GEORGE DILLON.

"Wild Philomela"

The step to silence taken,
More far than star from star;
The air still shaken
Where you are,

Where you burn with your branding,
Lift to your light,
Nourish understanding
Of our night.

Is it understanding,
Or mere brute grieving—
The senses demanding,
Or believing?

Does it matter, does it matter
In the void left behind,
Where the heart writhes to flatter
The mind?

Sudden, in desolation,
Where you were not, you grew.
Light filled creation,
Followed you.

From cruelty then or kindness
In escape you were away.
Utter blindness
Canceled day.

Bronze hair, the throat of one flying,
Level eyes scourging fear,
Singular laughter, eloquent crying—
You were here.

Yet, midway of Spartan duty,
Stood clear, facing the dawn
Of terrible, ultimate beauty—
And are gone.

Some will praise you, some doubt you;
Most will say and nothing tell.
To live without you
Is their hell.

Glittering utterly bright,
Fabulous valor unforgot—
O, once more the Light! The Night
Knew it not.

WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT.

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The President's Secretaries

A SECRETARY to a former President of the United States recently confided to a friend. "I was secretary to a difficult President," he said, "a man who—" and he expatiated on the problems that had confronted his superior. "Nevertheless," he added, after finishing his catalogue, "at three o'clock in the afternoon I couldn't find a damn thing to do."

This sally was made, however, after the gentleman had been secretary, and before Mr. Hoover became President. The present active-minded and detail-mannered incumbent of the White House could keep twenty secretaries scratching. Not that he is over-working with three. Mr. Hoover would probably find it harder to play more and work less. But neither have the three Presidential secretaries sinecures. In spite of the grumbling of Democratic Senators at having to provide more money for Mr. Hoover's staff, and the Gridiron dinner raillery about a secretarial day and night shift, at five o'clock in the afternoon the White House secretariat is still functioning. The only additional endeavor by which it could spare "the Chief" would be the elimination of adverse press comment. But such an attempt would increase the comment and hence counteract the policy of the Administration, which is efficiency.

Presidents Wilson and Harding carried on with one secretary apiece. Mr. Coolidge called a classmate to his assistance, but Mr. Clark had neither the title, rank nor salary, at least official, of a secretary. On the government books he was an executive clerk receiving $2,500 less than Mr. Sanders, and at a dinner he was several chairs further removed from the hostess. President Hoover succeeded in getting a $10,000 appropriation for each of his three secretaries who, co-equal in title and rank, would agitate a hostess by a simultaneous appearance nearly as much as a Gann-Longworth combination. These three distinguished gentlemen are Mr. Akerson, Mr. Newton, and Mr. Richey.

There are other secretarial attachés, who are called secretaries by Administration critics: Mr. Strother, former editor of World's Work, who provides the research and literary twist for presidential speeches; and Mr. Burke, general counsel for the Republican National Committee, who conducts himself as a confidential secretary. The actual secretariat, however, is confined to the above-named triumvirate, two of whom were on Mr. Hoover's private pay-roll when he was in the Cabinet—indicating how indispensable they are. It is not that Mr. Hoover has turned parsimonious, but private aides are less becoming to a President than public servants. Two of the secretaries are from Minnesota, that troublesome and rebellious region, from which they have, nevertheless, brought a conservative point of view.

The secretariat was expanded to afford the Executive a grip—through Mr. Newton—and a watch—through Mr. Richey—on the departments and other branches of the government. In spite of the Chief's reserve, his secretaries know more about his opinions than Mr. Coolidge's secretary about his—although Mr. Hoover's point of view is likely to vary with the conferee. A minor advantage of a large secretariat is that it eludes blame. When the White House recently denied an unseemly query to the Tariff Commission about southern Senators, the fullness of the secretariat covered the sinner. Can anybody say it was Mr. Akerson who put the indecorous question and not Mr. Richey? Or Mr. Newton and not Mr. Burke?

George Edward Akerson, the best known of the triumvirate, is called the President's right-hand man. Everybody who comes to see Mr. Hoover will at least see Mr. Akerson, unless he fails to pass the sergeant at the gate and Pat McKenna in the reception room. Out of the mass of callers, it is Akerson's delicate job to thresh the wheat from the chaff, dismissing the latter as charmingly—though firmly—as he receives the former. He decides which photographs, for the newspapers and the screen, comport with the President's dignity. He handles the press. Twice a day he holds court for the hungry fellows that gather about his desk for morsels of news. He feeds them on routine scraps, such as appointments, leaving to the President's semi-weekly press conferences the more unusual wind-falls. His predecessors were not invested with this exacting task.

Formerly a newspaper man, Akerson is still popular with the colleagues he left behind and skilful with other callers. His looks and his manner are certainly no handicap. A fair, handsome Viking, he bears a curious resemblance to his Chief, thrilling many a lady in the reception room who thinks she has caught a glimpse of the President. To be sure, he is younger, carries his weight better, and has the kind of eyes one finds oneself smiling into; so that the disillusioned ladies are somewhat compensated, even if they fail to meet the President. In summer, smartly arrayed in white linen, he is particularly ornamental to the White House corps.

He puts more than color, however, into the sober outfit: he has punch. At Harvard, his Alma

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Mater after three years at negligible seats of learning, he was nicknamed "Breeze." Blowing into languid Washington as a correspondent of the Minneapolis Tribune, he was like a monsoon from the north. In spite of his hulk, he glides about the executive offices from caller to Chief to caller to telephone without a sign of fraying.

Sweeping over the piano keys at a hail-fellow-well-met party, he quickly captures the crowd. Everything he does is so big and western and airy: his motoring around the capital in the secretarial Pierce Arrow, or even the poise with which he used to let a waiting taxi click for three or four hours until he returned to it.

You think it strange that Mr. Hoover should have taken to this delightful Viking? Everybody does. Everybody likes him in spite of the promises he breaks. Besides, he has had a very respectable career. He was a bitter critic of the Non-Partisan League in the days of the radical Townley. Lindbergh *père* was a dangerous Red in his copy, and Mr. Kellogg was repeatedly boomed for the Senate. In the 1924 campaign, on the advisory board of the Republican National Committee, he not only helped to stem the LaFollette tide but tapped the resources for Hoover. He was rewarded with the secretaryship of the Hoover-Kellogg commission of the Sesqui-centennial, and subsequently with a place at the elbow and on the private pay-roll of the Secretary of Commerce. An expert on northwestern politics, he steered his Chief wisely. His faithfulness would even melt his conservatism whenever the Chief acquired a liberal notion. He was the first Hoover worshipper.

Walter Hughes Newton left an important position in Congress to help Mr. Hoover by acting as liaison between the two. No brilliant leader ever inspired more devotees than the efficient Mr. Hoover; but Mr. Newton will probably be rewarded with a Federal judgeship. In the meantime he can lobby for his Chief, not as his emissary, but as a colleague of the members. He has the privilege of the floor, and worked hand in hand with Messrs. Longworth, Snell and Hawley to jam the tariff bill through the House.

He is Mr. Hoover's contact man with the departments, on whose reorganization they are working, and the independent bureaus that do not come under any department but report directly to the Executive. There are eighteen to twenty of these, such as the Veterans' Bureau, the Shipping Board, and the Employees' Compensation Commission, whose annual expenditure is $600,000,000. As a member of the important Interstate and Foreign Commerce Committee, Mr. Newton came within Secretary Hoover's province and impressed him by his conservatism, loyalty, and good standing on the hill. Newton can rake a colleague over the coals for voting on the debenture, without provoking resentment. A studious-looking man, with heavy glasses, he nevertheless has a pleasant blue-eyed smile and a directness in which enmity cannot breed. So he handles the politicians.

Lawrence Richey, the third Hoover worshipper, is small but solid, rosy-looking but reserved, an inscrutable son of Italy who murmurs, "Mr. Akerson can tell you what I do." Mr. Akerson will tell you that Mr. Richey handles the correspondence, which, undoubtedly, he does. But such an avalanche of letters flows into the White House that there are a few for everybody, and Mr. Richey is too versatile to do that alone. Some of the newspaper men will tell you that he buys the President's fishing tackle and real estate, and indeed he does that, too. But Mr. Richey is too useful to spend all his time thus.

At thirteen, when, it is said, his name was Ricci or Rizzi, the Burns secret service men used him to round up a band of counterfeiters in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. To avert suspicion, he played ball around the warehouse in which they operated, and one dark night climbed through a transom, too small for the entrance of a man. When he grew up, he investigated prisons for a magazine, automobile thefts for insurance companies, and the Chicago Police Department for the Civil Service Commission. As a United States Secret Service agent, he attended President Roosevelt at Oyster Bay. He is so canny that when Mr. Hoover, as United States Food Administrator, sought a detective to uncover hoarders and other illegal practicers, Mr. Richey was recommended. He has since turned down numerous lucrative business offers, preferring to flit around the country for the inspiring Chief, in whose service he has not remained poor. His simple title in the Department of Commerce, "Assistant to Mr. Hoover," gave no clue to the mystery of his activities.

Nor does his present title of secretary, silent and sequestered as he is in a quiet, orderly, unfrequented-looking retreat in the executive offices. No matter how anybody else may talk or pretend, Mr. Richey is undoubtedly the most personal and confidential of the secretarial group. He plays in Mr. Hoover's medicine ball cabinet, and Mr. Hoover fishes on his Catoctin estate. Minor illustrations of his service to the Chief were seen during the campaign. When a newspaper man attempted to dig up the record of a case that was better buried, he found that Mr. Richey had called for it three years before. On another occasion a reporter, arriving at his office to write an unfriendly piece about the Chief, discovered that the editor had already been notified by the alert Mr. Richey. If some of the correspondents feel a trifle uneasy with him, it is simply because he is too wise to disclose his secrets.

A charming newspaper man, a respected Congressman, and an excellent detective—these constitute the new White House secretariat. Who but Mr. Hoover could have allocated his work so efficiently?

DUFF GILFOND.

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Tom Mooney in Jail

SAN QUENTIN is the name of the prison. You tell the ticket agent in San Francisco that you want to go there, and he says, "One way, or 'round trip?" and laughs. You perceive that this is his standard joke, made to everyone who names this destination and is not accompanied by a sheriff's deputy. So you say, as briskly as you can, "Round trip, thank you!"—and wonder how many people have crushed back their misery to smile with the ticket agent. Visitors to prisoners are not usually happy; but they are too humble to snub an innocent ticket agent who has only one joke.

To the prison is a long, dull journey, by ferry and train and omnibus. The train ride is through a succession of little commuting towns with charming Spanish houses among heavy foliage, and rows of automobiles parked at the station waiting Papa's return from the city on the 6:27—little paradises of the comfortable middle class which, in California, is so violently conservative and has been responsible for so much of the state's savagery toward radicalism in recent years. At last you change to an automobile and drive along the shore of San Francisco Bay to the prison, which stands on something of a promontory. To one whose imagination has pictured a wretched dungeon, the penitentiary seems surprisingly cheerful. The hillside behind it is gay with flowers, which are tended by prisoners in gray working suits; the only unusual thing about their costume is their caps which have long, flat visors. They are shockingly young, they are bright-eyed and cheerful; if it were not for the unusually large proportion of Negroes, the first forty whom one sees might just as well have been forty seniors from any college.

A rather long wait in the bright yellow, varnished office of the captain of the guard, and then in comes the most famous political prisoner in the world, since the death of Sacco and Vanzetti—Tom Mooney, the victim of an almost successful attempt at judicial murder by the state, a man who has been kept in prison for thirteen years though there is now not a shred of evidence against him, and a good deal of evidence that he had nothing to do with the crime for which he was first sentenced to death and then to life imprisonment. He is dressed all in white—he is a waiter now in the officers' and guards' mess hall—and he looks well, pink-cheeked and plumper than he was when the most familiar photograph of him was taken. Several years ago he was ill, with severe stomach trouble. He felt, with some reason, that he had been forgotten, that "the Mooney case" was an old story, and that he was in danger of rotting for the rest of his life in a cell while he waited for the mill of the gods to grind backward. Today things are looking up. His stomach trouble has been conquered, the prison treatment of him has been better, and the agitation on his behalf has lately been going forward with redoubled vigor. The terrible pressure of martyrdom either warps personality or produces a finer distillation; in Mooney's case, the latter is certainly what has happened. He begins to talk at once, with animation, almost enthusiasm, rapidly though quietly, leaning forward and looking intently at his *vis-a-vis*. His manner is not unlike that of another political prisoner, the late Eugene Debs, as I saw him on the day after his release from Atlanta prison.

Does he think Governor Young of California intends to set him free? He doesn't know, says Tom Mooney, but he does know this: that the greatest danger to his cause is over-confidence. More than once, in the thirteen years that have been stolen from him, he has heard reports that he was to be freed, and these reports have always turned out to be false. "The one thing I ask of my friends who have been working for my release is that they keep on working. Over-confidence is the most fatal of weaknesses. I hope the agitation won't stop unless and until the Governor has signed and delivered the papers."

Why had he refused parole, when it was so broadly hinted that the Governor would gladly have accepted this way out of the dilemma?

For two reasons, said Tom Mooney. The first was that the acceptance of parole would have seemed an admission of guilt. The second was that under the California system, a paroled prisoner is bound by a multitude of irritating and onerous restrictions. He may not drive an automobile or any other vehicle—"and how," says Tom Mooney with a smile, "can anybody exist in California nowadays without driving a car?" He may not change his job without the consent of the parole officer, a consent which the prisoner is naturally most reluctant to ask. Employers are well aware of this situation and if they have given a job to a man on parole—an act which they regard as charity in any case—they take advantage of the fact that, practically speaking, he cannot quit. The man on parole cannot even move from one residence to another without getting permission. And if he infringes any of these rules—actually or in the imagination of the authorities—then back to prison he goes, under conditions much worse than before he came out.

What will he do if he is set free? He hasn't thought much about it; hasn't dared let himself think about it. First of all, though, he will work for the release of Warren K. Billings. Billings was convicted with Mooney, on the same perjured testimony. The reason the agitation for freedom has centered upon Mooney instead of Billings is partly a technical one. Billings had previously been convicted of another crime growing out of a labor struggle—a crime of which there is the best of reason to believe that he is innocent. Under the California law a man twice convicted cannot be pardoned without a favorable recommendation of a majority of the state Supreme Court. Such a

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recommendation, for political reasons which have nothing to do with his guilt or innocence, would be very difficult to obtain. If the attempt to free him had been made and had failed, then Mooney's case, also, would have been jeopardized, and in all probability fatally. On the other hand, Mooney's success would be the strongest possible aid to Billings.

The decision to concentrate first on the release of Mooney was so important that it could be made by one man only—by Billings himself. It was made by him. But, says Tom Mooney, if he is set free he will never rest until Warren Billings is free, too.

And after that?

Mooney doesn't know. The labor movement, to which his life had previously been devoted, has traveled fast and far during the thirteen years that he has been locked away. Its conservative wing has grown more conservative than ever: probably the indifference of that branch of organized labor in California to an injustice done a radical is the chief cause for Mooney's being still in jail today. Radical labor has also traveled roads unknown to him: Mooney's jail sentence is a year older than the Russian Revolution! He will need to orient himself in a world which has seen more profound changes during the thirteen years of his living entombment than during any previous half century. It will take a long while.

The visitor's time is up: we shake hands and say good-bye, there in the office of the guard where all day long one pitiful woman's face after another appears before the little grilled window, asking always to talk to a prisoner. Outside, the sun is bright, San Francisco Bay is blue and the hillside gay with flowers. Tom Mooney in the doorway waves good-bye, and then goes back into the prison where the state of California has kept him for thirteen years, and where, for all I know to the contrary, it intends to keep him for the rest of his life.

BRUCE BLIVEN.

Washington Notes

ONE interesting thing about the recent appearance here of the patriotic employers of Mr. Shearer, the big navy propagandist who went to Geneva on the shipbuilders' secret payroll and worked against the policy of his government, was the complete absence of truculence in the witness-stand manners of these gentlemen.

In the past when they have been called up by Senate committees, such Big Business executives as these have exuded indignation from ever pore. Their general attitude has been that it was a great piece of impertinence to take up the time of men of large affairs such as they, and intolerable effrontery to ask them personal questions about their private affairs. On former occasions, the Big Business men have pugnaciously lectured Senators and, on advice of high-priced counsel, refused to answer. There was none of that in the shipbuilding investigation. The heads and sub-heads of these great corporations were suave and conciliatory, meek and anxious to please. So were their lawyers. There was no bristling upon their part, no angry protestation of outraged dignity. For this change there were several sound reasons. One undoubtedly was the presence in a Washington jail of a once defiant Big Business man, who on the advice of a bellicose lawyer refused to answer a question from the Senate committee inquiring into his private affairs. It is safe to assert that the thought of Harry Sinclair and his over-smart laywer, Mr. Littleton, was not at any time long absent from the minds of the heads of the shipbuilding corporations who last week appeared before the Senate Sub-Committee on Naval Affairs, the chairman of which is the painfully undistinguished Shortridge.

Another reason was that the shipbuilders were in a very tough spot indeed—a spot so tough that truculence, even had it been safe, would have reacted violently against them and stirred a public resentment even deeper than has resulted. The unvarnished, incontrovertible and known facts, the bare record of the undisputed and underhanded employment of Shearer, made meekness their cue. And meek they were. If they were not to concede their conscious participation in a sinister negotiation they were compelled to testify to a degree of stupidity almost incredible in men of their high industrial rank. The facts left no other alternative. If they were not sinister they had to be stupid. Without exception they agreed on the stupidity theory, and before they finished had glowingly painted themselves as the prize boobs of the business world. Beautifully passing the buck to subordinates, who were branded as utterly foolish, the heads of these concerns went on record as being wholly in the dark as to what took place in their own corporations, as having been kept in deepest ignorance of the adoption of a policy said by them to be particularly opposed to their business principles and totally repugnant to their personal feelings. Those who heard the shipbuilders' explanation of the employment of Shearer and, particularly, the unanimity with which even the subordinate officials protested that they had not read the twelve or fifteen reports sent by him from Geneva, agree that it was an unprecedented exhibition. Even the splendid good fellowship of the genial Schwab—just a steel puddler from Pittsburgh—who, showering compliments right and left, supplemented his declaration of complete disapproval and complete ignorance of Shearer and his activities, with the assertion that he is a pacifist who favors the sinking of all battleships—even Mr. Schwab could not prevent large damage to the prestige and repute of the corporations concerned and of the men who run them.

As to the result: for one thing, certainly the disclosures strengthen the whole disarmament movement. The revelations that a shipbuilding, big-navy propagandist had helped wreck the Geneva conference has unquestionably made the general disarmament sentiment more militant. It adds to the timeliness and force of the Hoover effort and deepens the interest in the visit of the British Prime Minister. Moreover, it insures the absence—or at any rate vaccinates against their power for harm—of Shearers at the next conference. And, to a considerable extent, it nullifies the influence of the technical obstructionists in the

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future by placing their output under a general suspicion of being anti-disarmament propaganda from selfishly interested sources. Altogether, that blast of the efficient Herbert, which with Borah's aid wrung this investigation from a more or less unenthusiastic Naval Affairs Committee, is vastly beneficial to the administration program, with which the aforesaid committee was in anything but hearty accord. Incidentally, it should be mentioned that one of the saddest sights during the hearings was the face of Senator "Freddy" Hale, the big-navy chairman of the Naval Committee, who officiated merely as an "observer." He was the picture of woe. His worst moments, perhaps, were those when the facts about the $140,000 lobby for the White-Jones cruiser bill were being brought out.

Another not unpleasant result of the investigation has been the apprehensive chill which has passed down the whole army of lobbyists now encamped in Washington pending the passage of the tariff bill, if any. The public appetite for disclosures concerning them has been whetted by a lot of general denunciation from Democrats and Progressives. A few days ago one of the most reactionary and hide-bound Republican newspapers demanded an immediate investigation. The presence and persistence of the tariff lobby is a matter of common knowledge. The revelations concerning Mr. Shearer and the shipbuilders have helped focus congressional and journalistic attention upon them—and it is no secret that they are sufficiently alarmed to begin to try to "cover up." The possibility, suggested by Hoover's aggressiveness in the Shearer-shipbuilders case, that there may come later from the White House such another broadside as once sent the lobbyists scurrying to their holes in fright when Woodrow Wilson was President, has seeped into the tariff lobby consciousness. The whole smelly subject of congressional lobbying has been stirred up; if nothing else comes from the promises of resolutions and general inquiry, one result already achieved is a lessening of lobby pressure all around, and a patent desire of the more conspicuous and pertinacious of the lobbyists to be less conspicuous and less pertinacious. Thus it seems plain that the Shearer incident has not only helped Hoover in regard to disarmament, but has, to some extent at least, improved his tariff situation. The obviousness of these salutary facts should encourage him to plainer speaking on the tariff bill. His flexible tariff statement may have been needed from his viewpoint, but there is neither public interest in nor public understanding of the matter. What is of public interest is the rates. There is, I think, a fast-growing desire to know where Mr. Hoover really stands on them. Before long, I am told by charter members of the Medicine-ball Cabinet, he will fully reveal his feelings. What he is waiting for is the "psychological moment." It will be too bad if the moment gets by while he is absorbed in disarmament and MacDonald.

The comic side of the clash over prohibition enforcement last week, between Mr. Hoover and Senator Howell of Nebraska, is due, of course, to the fact that they are both drys. When the drys disagree it ought to make a wet holiday. Had the extinct James A. Reed of Missouri or the extinct William Cabell Bruce of Maryland been in the Senate, this phase of the controversy would not have escaped comment. But the wet members left in the Senate are not only slow in the head, but lack the right sort of heart-beat for points of this sort. However, due largely to the gentlemanly Brookhart, who blabbed about a two-year-old dinner at which he was a guest, given by Walter Hahey, a former Washington correspondent and now a prosperous New York stock broker, considerable interest was sustained in the matter for several days. The really interesting feature was the fact that Mr. Hoover and Senator Howell were both hurt in their feelings by each other. The White House view is, that instead of denouncing the District of Columbia situation, what Senator Howell, as a sincere dry, should do is to hold Washington up as one city where coöperation between the local police and the Federal prohibition officers proves enforcement possible. The contention is that in Washington there is a complete absence of speakeasies, night clubs and saloons such as exist in other large cities, in which liquor is bought and sold freely and safely. It is not denied that there is a lot of bootlegging in Washington or that there is considerable liquor drinking, but it is denied that there exists here the sort of violation going on in other cities. These facts, it is said, should have been known to Mr. Howell. It was not helpful of Mr. Howell to make a general charge about Washington which he could not substantiate. That, in effect, was the White House view of his allegations.

On the other hand, Senator Howell was hurt that Mr. Hoover should call upon him for concrete evidence when he had none available. He had no thought of embarrassing the administration. He regarded Mr. Hoover as his friend and believed they saw eye to eye in the liquor issue. It pained him to have his general charges challenged by a dry Republican. He would have welcomed it from a wet Democrat but this was different. All he was really doing was making the sort of dry speech designed to do him good in Nebraska. He had no idea anyone would take issue with him, least of all the President. The fact about Washington is, that with White House pressure behind them the local police have to a large extent dried it up as far as the speakeasies are concerned and as far as the downtown clubs are concerned. However, there is in the town a large amount of illegal private drinking, and the bootleggers are reasonably numerous, prosperous and safe. All of which goes to prove that regardless of the law, regardless of the coöperation of the local police, and regardless of the White House attitude, those who want to drink liquor and have the money to buy it can get it. They do in Washington as everywhere else, and there is no way to stop it. Administration spokesmen admit this, but insist that since Hoover came in there is less drinking in Washington social circles than ever before; they claim that among the higher public officials, except in Congress, there is practically none, and that the speakeasy has disappeared. It is true that half a dozen hostesses of more or less importance who served liquor at dinner prior to March 4 have dry dinners now. But what, if anything, does that prove? The truth is that Washington conditions in the matter of liquor are not as bad as Mr. Howell and Mr. Brookhart depict them. Nor are they as good as the White House thinks.

T. R. B.

Washington.

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Two Special Openings

The Sea Gull, by Anton Chekhov, translated by Constance Garnett. Civic Repertory Theater, September 9, 1929.

Fiesta, by Michael Gold. Garrick Theater, September 17, 1929.

THE PERFORMANCE of "The Sea Gull," the opening bill for the fourth season of the Civic Repertory Theater, was at least fair. In such a play, made up as it is of characters so intensely set in reaction to each other and to the whole life they share, our old-time actors, of two generations ago, would in some respects have done better. They understood how to put an edge on their personages, to make them stand clear and go straight over the footlights. Technically they were much more equipped than these present-day actors that we see on Fourteenth Street. But at the same time these players of the old school would never have understood what it was all about, and could never by the wildest chance have contrived to subordinate themselves to the subtler meaning and exchange of the play. Our new stage is in the right direction for Chekhov, but the actors have not enough technical security for these natural effects in a deeper sense, not enough private prayer for the flavor of their own souls, not enough playing together in a company, to get the flow and quiver of this dramatist or to create, as he willed it, the antiphonal shine and poignancy of the life set before us.

The production as a whole, whatever shortcomings it may have had, was never false. However short it may have come of that necessary utmost penetration and that mutual current among all the characters, it moved always with honesty, and with respect for the work of art in hand, and without specious and stagey yearnings—fine qualities in this theater that radiate down into it from its leading figure, Miss Eva Le Gallienne. Miss Le Gallienne herself played Masha with sincerity and with an admirable scaling of her role to its due place in the play. The prime limitation of her acting is that it still lacks the right degree of movement from the center outward. You can see this even in a single simple gesture toward another person in the scene, you can see that the gesture, or movement, does not proceed enough from the nerves, emotion, idea, from which it first arises; it is an indication rather than acting. Miss Merle Maddern, a newcomer among these players, in the brilliant role of Madame Treplev, the actress, is for the more obvious actress-moments very good; in the richer and more complex depths of the character, she only grazes its quality.

Mr. Jacob Ben-Ami, also new at the Civic Repertory Theater, as Trigorin, was not wholly successful in the scenes where Chekhov was painting matters close to his own world of authorship. Trigorin is a social and gifted writer, not a great one, and in these scenes Mr. Ben-Ami misses the plane of the role. He darkens and intensifies the values too much; Trigorin becomes at once more limited and more profound than he was meant to be; and the accent, therefore, that was intended for the young people, for the young dramatist and Nina, the girl whom he loves and who cannot escape her infatuation for Trigorin, is scattered; the sea gull theme is blurred by creating the wrong pathos in a third character, and the scale of the play is thus sadly disturbed. The actor's stage movement also was curiously off; the short, sliding steps and general bodily rhythm suggested an old father rather than a man under forty, which Chekhov tells us Trigorin is. In the scenes with Nina—shy dreams, the awakening life, the lure toward her destruction through love and worship of glory—Mr. Ben-Ami shows that profound and beautiful naturalness of understanding and that tenderness for life of which, more than any other actor on our stage, he is capable.

But Chekhov in relation to our theater supplied the most interesting aspect of this occasion. The number of Chekhov revivals these past few seasons—of which Mr. Leo Bulgakhov's "The Sea Gull" last year was one, but the most notable of which, of course, have been at the Civic Repertory Theater, "The Cherry Orchard" with Madame Nazimova most of all—might well give us food for thought. In the same way, the crowd at Miss Le Gallienne's doors the other night, when Chekhov opened the season, was significant.

Of the important European dramatists, Chekhov is at present the one who can be of most use to us. The technique of Ibsen is by now absorbed everywhere into modern playwriting, in so far as an insistent technical method, as divorced from the moral seriousness behind it, can be absorbed. At the other extreme, the poetic method seems far off from what is being thought for the stage. Chekhov's is of them all, the method most profoundly available to our uses. Without more management or stylization than we employ, without more removal or traditional manner than we practice, his realism has the same world as our realism, the only world our art knows for the present. What Chekhov can give us is plain. More delicacy of perception, more deeply interwoven themes, more subtlety of feeling, more poignancy, sincerity and truth of intention. For our American dramatists of today he affords the closest great influence to be had.

Mr. Michael Gold's play of Mexican revolution, passion, family and scene has been for some time booked for production by the Provincetown Playhouse. As a play its defects are rather manifest: a lack of finish, a lack in the ordering of the whole structure, sad lapses in taste often enough, a lack in maturity of meaning. Its virtues are as positive: a genuine poetic instinct for types, fresh feeling, contrasts of personality, raw color, youth and pressing life. "Fiesta" has in it the making either of a really poetic drama or of a trick play in a good Broadway tradition. It struggles at the start with an impossibility, I mean the portrayal of Mexican peons by Nordic players. One, two or three players in an expert company might manage this, but the hope for that, even, is very small. Diction, movement, volume and energy of emotion, transitions in feeling, and so on and so on, these are in the actor's way and almost unsurmountable. The better the impersonation is done, in the ordinary stage sense, the falser it is—the traditional stage Italian, for example. The better it is done, in the high stage sense, the more it may stray, in its mentality, from the thing it attempts to create—in my whole experience I never saw anything farther from its object than the Moscow Art Theater was from the Venetian when it produced its long-

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studied and elaborately finished "La Locandiera"; the more its own kind of Russian perfection appeared, the more Goldoni faded out of it. In the high style, great formalized dramatic technique, like Shakespeare at his best or the Greeks, the art evades this problem of likeness and fidelity and escapes the onus of this patent unreality; but realism tackling such alien material must nearly always come a cropper.

"Fiesta" tells the story of two brothers on their mother's hacienda. One is a rake and prodigal, beloved by the peons. The older brother, returning from the revolution with new theories, is severe, Spartan toward the hacienda and himself. He brings with him a girl of sixteen, the daughter of a revolutionary chief. The salvation of the Mexican people is tied up in his mind with this girl, her virgin purity theirs, her youth, her beauty, her strength, her wrongs, all theirs. Meantime he, not quite knowing it himself, is madly in love with her. She loves a peon lad. The mother, sensing the real nature of her son's feeling, plans to cure his revolutionary revolt by disillusioning him about his ideal. The younger brother seduces the girl at the fiesta, to which everyone has slipped away in spite of the master's orders. The play ends with the conflict of the brothers, the mother's despair and authority, and finally, when the rulers of the hacienda have gone to their apartments, with the fiesta breaking into the house —a really fine and imaginative ending. There are many lesser threads of imagination throughout the play.

Miss Beverly Sitgreaves gives a performance of the mother that is better than it would be from any actress I can think of. It has the right dignity and passionate heroics, the right formality for this position that is given to the Latin mother, and the right largeness of outline in the motives and emotions. Mr. Carl Benton Reed as the elder brother, a hard part, Mr. George Tobias as the soldier Santiago, Mr. Allen Nagel as old Pablo, and Mr. Charles McCarthy, Jr., as the young peon lover, give honest performances, very unequal, but close in purpose to the play; and Mr. Jack La Rue, as the younger brother, is the most convincing of the actors. In his scenes with his brother and his mother he really understands the conflicts that lie in such relationships in a Latin family and the puzzling quick changes in feeling that arise. Mr. Cleon Throckmorton in his décor varied from passable to the truly dramatic. In the fiesta scene, those walls with the high mountain slope beyond, all the way up to the proscenium arch, he created something quite fresh and exciting, with the right unreality and wild beauty to it. Everything considered, there were excellent moments in the dancing, the creation of which is credited to Madame Tamiris. In his directing, Mr. James Light's greatest achievement was a certain fine spirit among the players themselves that is one of the final and most fruitful elements in the theater art, though rarely found.

The thing most important to be said about this opening production of the Provincetown company in its new theater, is this: we are not to infer that many of these defects in the play and the production are unknown to any one in the group; the point is that the author has been given a chance to see the play he wrote produced, not some wisely and shrewdly refurbished form of it; young actors are given their young chances, and genuine experiment, with all its prophetic possibilities and reckless horrors, is allowed. As practical business theater, it is another matter; but as art, the artist himself does not know just when he will discover what he seeks, he may not even know just what he does seek. That he may have a chance to find it is everything.

STARK YOUNG.

CORRESPONDENCE

Science and Behavior

SIR: Gerald Heard, in "The Ascent of Humanity," forecasts the subordination of the individualistic self to a more enlightened social self under a civilization influenced by "an individualized understanding." Among the factors which he places behind that influence are the findings of Einstein, Bohr, Hubble, and other eminent scientists. In Mr. Calverton's very good review of this very good book, in the August 21 issue of The New Republic, he doubts the carry-over possibilities of these scientific findings to "sweep over into the concrete behavior of life."

What Mr. Calverton apparently overlooks is that it is not necessary for an understanding of an influence to reach the mind of your everyday man in order that the influence itself reach his everyday behavior. The clover farmer may see no relation whatsoever between clover and cats. Yet if it were not for his cats he would not be in the clover-hay business. For the cats kill the field mice who would otherwise destroy the bee whose fertilizing activity makes the clover crop possible. This is ill for the field mouse but good for the bee, the clover and the farmer.

The ordinary man may have no greater understanding of science than he has of cats, but the carry-over into his own behavior for good or ill is just as automatic and certain. Your native-born 100-percent American does not connect the blessings of his nativity in any way with celestial physics, and not ten men in America, outside of university circles, ever heard of Professor Rigiomontanus. Yet it was this great astronomer's findings which convinced Columbus that the earth was spherical and not flat, and inspired him to sail far enough around it to discover a very desirable country for all native-born Americans to be born in. Quite a carry-over here.

Is there any historian today who does not assign an important place among the causes of the War to Neo-Darwinism with its over-emphasis on mechanical economic-determinism and its extreme materialistic extension of the doctrine of the survival of the fittest? Yet how many of the War's 70,000,000 maimed, known dead, lost, unaccounted for, and widows and orphans, ever made any mental connection between the conduct of the late war and the gentle biologist who some seventy odd years ago began a few simple experimentations in cross-breeding turtle doves on his quiet country estate in England? Quite a "sweep over" here from science "into the concrete behavior of life."

Mr. Calverton may not find much evidence of the "sweep over" from the findings of such scientists as Einstein, Bohr, Hubble, and others in the direction of taming and socializing man's ego. But Walter Wheeler Cook, of Yale and Johns Hopkins, has already given the evidence to those of us who are interested in legal reform. And on the very page of The New Republic where Mr. Calverton brings his expressions of doubt to a doleful close, there is reviewed the latest book of the great Reuff, in which he correlates such findings with all the social sciences and every field of thought and life. Such men are the pioneer translators of science into terms of everyday life. The carry-over to the people will complete itself through a succession of other leaders with ever larger followings until the multitude is stirred to action. The vast majority of those who voted for President Hoover's great engineering ability to remove social mountains know nothing of the content of that ability, and they have never heard of any of his teachers.

When the time comes for the findings of Einstein and his contemporaries in science to complete their carry-over into general

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human conduct and behavior, and the social self begins to take its place in its ascendency over the individualistic self in accordance with the prophecy of Gerald Heard, those who step in line will make no mental connections whatsoever with Einstein, or Heard either for that matter. Their heroes will be nearer at hand. But the result will be the same.

Tulane University, New Orleans, La. MILTON COLVIN.

The Blessings of the Tariff

SIR: Here is an item your American farmers might smoke: The United States tariff on wheat is 42 cents; the Canadian tariff on wheat is 12 cents. The United States farmer markets wheat in Canada and pays the duty of 12 cents, in order to get into a higher market.

Wicked, isn't it?

Still, the boys will want to raise the tariff on wheat.

R. J. DEACHMAN.

Consumers' League of Canada, Harva, Canada.

Why They Leave the Farm

SIR: Just another word anent Mr. Borsodi's arguments as to the advantages of rural life. The latest statistics given out by the National Education Association say that "the city can hold nine months of school each year while the average for the rural districts is seven months. There is 7.7 percent illiteracy in rural districts and 4.4 percent in the city. The difference in health defects is startling. Eye defects, rural 23 percent, city 12; defective teeth, rural 48 percent, city 33. Only 25.7 percent of the rural children, 15 to 18 years of age, are in the high school, as compared with 71.1 percent in the city."

The Bureau of Agricultural Economics have just completed a survey of 20,000 farmers who have left the farms and moved to the cities during the past eight years. With their families they total considerably over 100,000 persons, and the influx this year is greater than in any previous year.

Of these, 7,500 went because help on the farm was scarce; 5,000 because old age was creeping up and the work was too hard and help scarce; 2,200 to get adequate schooling for their children; 4,000 because they were giving up the home farm to sons and sons-in-law; 500 went because they had saved enough money to go and obtain in the cities what they had always craved and couldn't get on the farm. The balance gave many scattering reasons hard to classify.

The picture is not altogether black. Improved methods of breeding, better selection of seed, fertilization and modern farm machinery have resulted in greater crop production with less man-power. After all there is a rather definite limit to the number of cabbages, eggs, and sides of bacon that a given population can consume. Consumption in other lines is much more elastic. This excess man-power, therefore, must be turned from the production of foodstuffs and raw materials to industrial or cultural and educational pursuits. Perhaps we may grow a few flowers of civilization as well as the necessary roots and leaves.

ZELLA WRIGHT NEWCOMB.

Washington, D. C.

The Voice of Massachusetts

SIR: Leafing through a volume of Whittier, long a memory upon a shelf, I came upon lines perhaps forgotten by Massachusetts of late years, but pertinent to the new tyranny now tenderly nurtured in the Cradle of Liberty. Were they quoted, I wonder, at the Sacco-Vanzetti memorial meeting? Perhaps Judge Thayer is too modern and President Lowell too highly educated to read Whittier.

> The voice of Massachusetts! Of her free sons and daughters—
> Deep calling unto deep aloud—the sound of many waters!
> Against the burden of that voice what tyrant power shall stand?
> *No fetters in the Bay State! No slave upon her land!*
>
> For us and for our children, the vow which we have given
> For freedom and humanity is registered in heaven;
> No slave-hunt in our borders—no pirate on our strand!
> *No fetters in the Bay State—no slave upon our land!*

The cobbler and the fish-peddler, it may be, were not reckoned among the "free sons" of the state whose earliest anarchists were the ruffians of the Tea Party and the minute men of Lexington.

MABLE DODGE HOLMES.

Philadelphia, Pa.

Europe's Only Source of Gold

SIR: This morning I was thrilled to read the keenly analytical and convincing argument in your current issue against an increase in the tariff.

This evening I was thrilled again on seeing that the St. Louis Post-Dispatch felt as I did about your article. When a great newspaper join hands with a great weekly magazine to expose, with such weapons, the fallacious reasoning that argues for a heightening of the tariff wall, good will surely result.

Still another reason that there should be no increase in the tariff is because America is creditor to the world. Already we have more of the world's gold than the Federal Reserve Board thought best for us to hold, if the economic stability of our debtors were not to be put in jeopardy. The only place our debtors can get gold, to pay us, is from us. Making further loans does no good. That is simply borrowing from Peter to pay Paul. They must get a net balance of gold. And all they have to give us is goods and services.

Our gold can be obtained through goods sold to us, through our tourist expenditures abroad, through immigrant remittances and, in effect, through cancellation of debts. But the goods sold us now are more than offset by the goods bought from us. This balance, unfavorable to our debtors, must also be paid us in gold. Therefore the gold necessary to pay this balance of trade, plus the debts, must be obtained from our tourist expenditures abroad, from immigrant remittances, etc. As these means obviously can never supply sufficient gold, the inevitable conclusion is that unless through reduction of the tariff, or by other means, provision is made for us to take vastly more goods from our debtors, the only alternative is to cancel debts. In other words, if the debts are paid at all it must be largely with goods. If taking goods interferes with our commerce, we had best cancel debts.

L. B. TEBBETTS.

St. Louis, Mo.

A Tragic Defeat—and Its Lessons

SIR: The strikes in the Baldwin and Clinchfield mills at Marion, North Carolina, have been settled. The workers voted to go back for a fifty-five instead of a sixty to seventy-hour week, but with no increase in the rate of pay for piece work, so that they will either have to work harder or accept less than the pitiful wages which now average for most of them less than $12 a week. Supposedly there will be no discrimination in taking back the men whose discharge for union activities was the immediate cause of the strike in the Baldwin mills. Nothing at all is done about the miserable conditions in the mill village which were so poignantly described by a worker in a letter published in The New Republic for September 18.

No wonder the Southern press hails these terms as a "surrender" of the workers. The term is probably too strong. Such splendid fighting spirit cannot have been wholly in vain. Some employers may see the writing on the wall and improve conditions. The union is by no means driven out of Marion. Yet when all this is said, the bitter fact remains that we have suffered a serious defeat, and the best we can hope is that we can learn the lessons of the defeat. I feel a particular responsibility in the matter because, as chairman of the Emergency Committee for Strikers' Relief, established by the League for Industrial Democracy, I have been responsible for the appeals which raised practically all of the meager funds available for relief.

The defeat, I am convinced, was unnecessary. The profound discontent of the textile workers and the heroism of these particular strikers could have been better used. I do not mean this as a

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sweeping indictment of the men on the grounds. I do not primarily blame the judgment of the captains on the field or the men and women in the ranks. I blame the generalship of the American labor movement; its lack of plans, vision and machinery adequate to the matter in hand; its ox-cart tactics in an automobile age.

Here are the facts:

The Southern situation is critical to American labor. The industrialization of the South on the basis of a sixty-or sixty-six-hour week and a $12 to $13 average wage threatens everything won in the North as the pauper labor of Europe, that favorite bogey-man of the protectionists, never did. Some desultory attempt at organizing this spring had astonishing results. The United Textile Workers with a little help from the A. F. of L. followed up the reasonably successful spontaneous strikes in South Carolina and the Elizabethton strike with organizing work. Following the collapse of the Gastonia strike it had a chance to show that it could succeed where the Communist philosophy and method could not.

Something, I say, was done, but in the face of this challenge and this opportunity neither the U. T. W. nor the A. F. of L. made a survey of the field or had any central strategy. The Marion strike happened because the workers could not be held back when some of their number joined the union. Yet when Alfred Hoffmann, an able and energetic young organizer, called up the central office in New York on July 11, when the strike began, he was told that North Carolina must finance its own strike. North Carolina did not and could not finance its own strike. The Emergency Committee for Strikers' Relief, which had been formed as a supplementary industrial Red Cross to aid labor and put some decency and humanity in the industrial struggle, sent practically all the relief funds that were used until the strike was over.

Soon Marion became a critical point in the South. The eyes of other workers were on the gallant strikers. From a dozen or more towns they sent representatives to beg for organization. Neither organizers nor funds were available. The union did not even make a gesture to organize Tarboro, where mills owned by the Clinchfield people were kept running full blast while their fellow workers were on strike in Marion. In the mood of the North Carolina workers it would have been easy to get a very extensive textile strike, provided organizers and moderate funds for strike relief were available. They were not available. There was no central plan, no machinery for publicity, no machinery for relief. The employing interests could and did concentrate on Marion. At the first sign that the workers might oppose the reopening of the mills to strikebreakers, a reluctant militia was called out. It was easy enough to win one fight for the bosses by state troops. They could not have been used so generously if there was something approaching a general strike of textile workers as a result of the discharge of all who joined the union.

During these critical weeks President Green had time to join a committee to raise funds for a citizens' military training camp. Vice President Woll had time to make one speech at the University of Virginia, but he could not remain long enough even to answer the employers. The Executive Council was in session. It knew of the Marion situation but did nothing for relief. On the other hand, Mr. John Leary of the New York World, purporting to speak as a friend of President Green, told one of the manufacturers that he would advise that Hoffmann be removed or supplemented by someone more friendly, and he, a veteran newspaper man, allowed this morale-destroying story to get on the front page of the Southern papers. A few days later the strike was ended on the intervention of a supposedly liberal banker.

But discontent remains in Marion and in the textile field. Terrible conditions remain, which only concerted action can remedy. The condition of success is organization. Organizers rarely want to begin with a strike, but hostile employers can almost always force their hand. To face these things it is not yet altogether too late. But defeat will follow after defeat unless there is some central strategy and some backing of the harrassed United Textile Workers by the whole A. F. of L.

As I write, an afternoon paper carries the incredible report that this A. F. of L. backing is to take the form of an effort to "shift the allegiance of the Red-fearing South to the A. F. of L. and its unionization plan instead of to the textile operators." They are going to try to beat the operators at their own anti-red game. This in the face of the past history of unionizing activities in the South, which were ruthlessly fought before there was any Communist union, and in face of the candid admission of Southern employers and a large part of the Southern press that it is unionization which they are fighting.

What might easily be done is for the A. F. of L. to set up simple but effective machinery of relief, publicity, legal defense, and strategy to use in the support of one of its constituent unions which is bearing the brunt of the fight. The U. T. W. cannot finance the organization of the South alone. In its present mood it would welcome help of the A. F. of L. under conditions which would protect its autonomy. Is it too much to hope from the leadership of the American labor movement that it can work out such a plan and obtain its adoption at the forthcoming Toronto convention? Of course, in such a plan Southern leadership and Southern federations should be brought as far as possible into the foreground. But Northern labor has the right and duty to answer Northern capitalism in the South. Such opportunities as exist now, if they are lost, may not soon come again. Before Elizabethton and Gastonia and Marion, mobs and troops have crushed strikes and organization both North and South, even when the organization was under the auspices of the more conservative unions. On that fact the A. F. of L. must count, welcoming whatever decency it finds among employers, whatever sense of fair play exists in the communities, but depending on the strength of its own cause and the courage and wisdom of its own tactics to break the industrial serfdom of the South.

NORMAN THOMAS.

New York City.

Education for Workers

SIR: My attention has been called to a letter in the August 7 issue of The New Republic, wherein V. F. Calverton, in discussing the case of Dr. Calhoun and Brookwood, makes the following statement:

> It signifies the downfall of independent labor education in the United States. No longer have we an institution that can boast of its defense of freedom of radical education.

Such a statement in view of the existence of Commonwealth College is indefensible. Now in its seventh year, Commonwealth has an absolutely clean record as an independent labor college and as an institution where the right of any teacher or student to say what he believes to be the truth has never been challenged. It has had Wobblies, Communists, Socialists, Trade Unionists, and Independents on its teaching staff and in its student body. No teacher was ever interfered with in his teaching functions, nor was any student inside or outside of the classroom ever denied the right to express his full opinion on every subject. Every teacher and student who has been at Commonwealth will testify to this fact.

Dr. Zeuch, the Director at Commonwealth, is almost a fanatic on the question of freedom of teaching. One example will suffice. Last year the introductory course in economics was being conducted by Mr. Lucien Koch, now of the graduate school at Wisconsin. Dr. Zeuch would not think of visiting the class of any teacher without invitation. He wished to visit Mr. Koch's class and so asked permission of that instructor. Mr. Koch declined to grant permission. Dr. Zeuch accepted such a refusal, as a matter of right. Although Mr. Koch was teaching in Dr. Zeuch's department, Dr. Zeuch never was granted permission to visit his class. Such is the extent of freedom from interference at Commonwealth.

We will grant that Commonwealth is the only independent, self-governing, resident labor college in the United States. But that exception in all fairness must be made. The school is owned and operated by the teachers and third and fourth year college students. No one outside the members of the educational community has one word to say about the conduct of the school.

CLAY FULKS.

Commonwealth College, Mena, Ark.

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The National Recreation Congress

SIR: The National Recreation Congress will meet in Louisville October 14-19, and its discussions will be centered around the theme of leadership. This topic was selected because city recreation executives, like many Americans, most easily think and talk in terms of materials or facilities rather than in terms of the less obvious but more important element of leadership. We have agreed it would be good to do some close and candid thinking about the qualifications of guidance and direction, and their limitations.

Some of the detailed questions we expect to discuss are:

What is involved in leadership for the new leisure?
What do men and women want in the way of leadership?
What do children want? What do they need?
How can we best differentiate between teaching fundamental play skills and "freeing for creative expression"?
What are the essential qualifications of recreation leadership?
How can recreation leaders use the arts and crafts to develop creative minds?
How can they help carry over into community life interest in arts and crafts, music, dramatics, as developed in the schools?
What can leadership do to solve racial prejudices in sports?
How can we prevent athletics from assuming abnormal values?
What can recreation leadership do to relieve insanity?
How can leadership go without regimentation?
What is the best use of boys and girls as leaders?
What recent books throw light on the need and importance of recreation?
What are the common criticisms of recreation leadership?

These are but a few of several hundred questions which we have mailed to registered delegates to the Congress a month before the session, so that they may be thinking about them and come prepared to discuss them.

Our meeting will conclude with the Third National Playground Miniature Aircraft Aournament, for which we have qualified fifty-seven local champions from twenty cities.

JOSEPH LEE.

Boston, Mass.

Our Culture and Its Critics

SIR: Professor Dewey in "'America'—By Formula" sounds a welcome note again to us prepared a decade ago by Waldo Frank's "Our America." Most Americans have been too busy creating "culture" to sit down and caw about it with European-minded Americans or foreigners. And so while the wheels of things were got moving here, critics, both domestic and foreign, clinging to and armed with the ghostly shibboleths of an expiring system, thought to slay the great American trinity, Professor Dewey's "Quantification, mechanization and standardization," with barbs that were only echoes. The young American student is nigh on to nausea with these puerile pretences cloaking but a maudlin nostalgia for the good old days and the good old ways. The critic of America has to forge new kinds of questions in order to understand the answers that America can give. To ask about "spirituality" reveals already that the question is so utterly soaked in an old-world culture evaluation that there is no longer a language coin through which to communicate the newer American "culture." The word "culture" itself is so redolent of, and is so insulatedly limned about with, almost decadent connotations that it were better to adopt the now invidious "Americanization" in its place. A deeper analysis will show that what is called Americanization is but the apogee of what has and is happening in all industrial-minded countries. Comparison of France, Spain, and Italy, on the one hand, and Great Britain, Germany, and the United States on the other reveals, in the former predominantly agricultural countries, intuition philosophies, adherence to absolutisms, and religious or fatalistic mindedness; whereas in the latter we find quintessentially mathematic—or pragmatic—philosophies, democratic relativity, and a-religious puritanisms—efficiency. Following out the thread in the industrial countries, we find that America has brought it to the highest point. So that what the critics are really sending their shafts at is not only America, but the twentieth century; not our lack of "culture" but our tremendously threatening experimental fecundity; not our unspirituality, but our real faith in scientific possibility. The artistic-minded and the scientific-minded are lined up. It is our domestic happiness to have had a Waldo Frank in whom both these cultures are in perspect so wedded that we have an interpreter, and to have a John Dewey to tend to our garden of industrial philosophy and produce new seeds for young Europe's fields.

GEORGE GARFIELD.

New York City.

The Kellogg Pact and the League

SIR: Your editorial of September 4 about China, Russia, the League, and the Kellogg pact is very interesting. I refer particularly to the remarks about the Kellogg pact, its uselessness and its mischievousness. The pity is that you did not foresee this situation before the Senate ratified it. I tried at that time to dissuade you from its support, but to no avail. It slipped through the Senate mainly because the American people had been dazed by the wild promises of its proponents. How anyone with gumption could have imagined Coolidge and Kellogg evolving anything useful in international affairs was then and is now incomprehensible to me.

The facts are that since it was tricked by Lodge and Harvey into adopting a policy of isolation, the Republican party, ashamed of its action, has been trying to make amends. It has up to now lacked the brains and leadership to do other than muddy the waters.

The purpose of this letter is to appeal to you to lead, in America, a movement to incorporate the idea behind the Pact of Paris in the League Covenant, as suggested by Mr. MacDonald and your editorial; to liberalize the League Covenant in the light of ten years' experience, and finally to urge the present President of the United States to enter the front door, honorably, by adhering to the League and giving up the blundering efforts which have so far only made of us a meddlesome Mary. Mr. Hoover has the courage to do what he is convinced is right.

Will you help reopen this subject? VAL IRION.

New Orleans, La.

[Mr. Irion has a mistaken impression of the attitude of The New Republic toward the Kellogg pact. At the time of its proposal, when we advocated its adoption, we pointed out clearly that it was merely a beginning, and that its effect would be determined by the way in which it was implemented. We have not now abandoned our former general attitude of approval, but have expressed the opinion that "in the present crisis, the Kellogg pact has so far proved a worthless document. . . . The Kellogg pact alone cannot outlaw war. . . . If the anti-war pact is used to supplement League machinery, it will serve the cause of peace. If it is used by the United States to stultify League action, this pact may do incalculable harm." These remarks applied to the specific situation of possible League intervention in the Russo-Chinese dispute. The New Republic will do its best, according to its own lights, to encourage improvement of both instruments, but it does not believe the United States made any mistake in declining to join the League in 1920, although it has little sympathy with most of the motives of the pure isolationists.—THE EDITOR:.]

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The list of contributors to the Literary Section will be found on page 217 of that section.

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The New
REPUBLIC

Fall Literary Section

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Nothing Ever Happens to the Brave

A Farewell to Arms, by Ernest Hemingway. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. $2.50.

THE writings of Ernest Hemingway have very quickly put him in a prominent place among American writers, and his numerous admirers have looked forward with impatience and great expectations to his second novel. They should not be disappointed: "A Farewell to Arms" is worthy of their hopes and of its author's promise.

The book is cast in the form which Hemingway has apparently delimited for himself in the novel—a diary form. It is written in the first person, in that bare and unliterary style (unliterary except for echoes of Sherwood Anderson and Gertrude Stein), in that tone which suggests a roughly educated but sensitive poet who is prouder of his muscles than of his vocabulary, which we are now accustomed to associate with Hemingway's name. The conversation of the characters is as distinctly Hemingway conversation as the conversation in one of Shaw's plays is Shavian. But there are some marked differences between "A Farewell to Arms" and Hemingway's previous work.

For one thing, the design is more apparent, the material more solidly arranged. Perhaps the strongest criticism that could be levelled against "The Sun Also Rises" was that its action was concerned with flotsam in the eddy of a backwater. It was apparently possible for some readers to appreciate the masculinity of Hemingway's "anti-literary" style, to admit the authenticity of his characters, and still to say, "What of it?" This criticism I do not consider valid—there has always been, it seems to me, in the implications of Hemingway's prose, and in his characters themselves, a kind of symbolic content that gives the least of his stories a wider range than it seems to cover—but such a criticism was certainly possible. It is not, however, a criticism that can possibly be directed against "A Farewell to Arms." Fishing, drinking, and watching bullfights might be considered too superficial to be the stuff of tragedy, but love and death are not parochial themes.

The story begins in the summer of one of the middle years of the War. The hero is an American, Frederick Henry, in the Italian army on the Isonzo, in charge of a section of ambulances. It is before America has declared war, and he is the only American in Gorizia. But an English hospital unit has been sent down: he meets one of the nurses, Catherine Barkley, and falls in love with her. In the Italian offensive, he is wounded, and taken back to the base hospital in Milan where she too manages to be transferred. He is ordered to the front again just in time to be caught in the Caporetto retreat. In the mad scramble across the plains he loses the main column, is almost cut off by the Germans, and then almost shot by the Italians for not being with his section. He escapes, makes up his mind to desert from the army, and gets to Milan, where he eventually finds Catherine again. He is in mufti, the police are suspicious, and with the connivance of a friendly barman they row across the border into Switzerland. Their passports are in order, so they escape being interned. Catherine is going to have a baby. They spend the winter in a little cottage in the mountains, and in the spring go down to Lausanne, where the baby is to be born. Everything goes well for a time; then the doctor advises a Cæsarean operation: the baby is born dead, and Catherine has an unexpected hemorrhage and dies. Here the story ends. Or not quite here. Hemingway's characteristic last sentence is: "After a while I went out and left the hospital and walked back to the hotel in the rain."

The book has more in it than "The Sun Also Rises"; it is more of a story; and it is more carefully written. Sometimes this care is too evident.

> I had gone to no such place but to the smoke of cafés and nights when the room whirled and you needed to look at the wall to make it stop, nights in bed, drunk, when you knew that that was all there was, and the strange excitement of waking and not knowing who it

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> was with you, and the world all unreal in the dark and so exciting that you must resume again unknowing and not caring in the night, sure that this was all and all and all and not caring. Suddenly to care very much and to sleep to wake with it sometimes morning and all that had been there gone and everything sharp and hard and clear and sometimes a dispute about the cost.

This is a good description, but it is Hemingway gone temporarily Gertrude Stein. There is one other striking example of this manner, not new to Hemingway, but new to his serious vein:

> "I love your beard," Catherine said. "It's a great success. It looks so stiff and fierce and it's very soft and a great pleasure."

This speech of Catherine's occurs toward the end of the book. When she is first introduced, she talks, plausibly enough, in a manner which, though distinctly Hemingway, might also pass as British. In the last half of the book (except for the Gertrude Stein lapse quoted above), she is pure Hemingway. The change that comes over her, the change that comes over both the main characters, is not, I think, due to the author's carelessness. Whether he deliberately planned this metamorphosis or half-consciously allowed it to take place is of minor interest. The interesting and the significant thing is the nature of the change. A typical Hemingway hero and a not-quite-so-typical Hemingway heroine are transformed, long before the end, into the figures of two ideal lovers.

Hemingway has been generally regarded as one of the most representative spokesmen of a lost generation—a generation remarkable chiefly for its cynicism, its godlessness, and its complete lack of faith. He can still, I think, be regarded as a representative spokesman, but the strictures generally implied against his generation will soon, perhaps, have to be modified or further refined. As far as Hemingway himself is concerned, it can certainly no longer be said that his characters do not embody a very definite faith.

> "They won't get us," I said. "Because you're too brave. Nothing ever happens to the brave."

Rinaldi, the Italian surgeon who is the hero's room-mate in the first part of the book, has what almost amounts to a breakdown because he can discover nothing in life outside his three anodynes of women, wine and work. The note of hopelessness that dominated the whole of "The Sun Also Rises" is not absent in "A Farewell to Arms," nor is it weaker, but it has been subtly modified, so that it is not the note of hopelessness we hear so much as the undertone of courage. Hemingway is now definitely on the side of the angels, fallen angels though they are. The principal instrument of this change is Catherine. Brett, the heroine of "The Sun Also Rises," was really in a constant fever of despair; the selfless faith which Catherine gives her lover may seem to come from a knowledge very like despair, but it is not a fever. When we look back on the two women, it is much easier to believe in Brett's actual existence than in Catherine's—Brett was so imperfect, so unsatisfactory. And, like an old soldier, it would have been wrong for Brett to die. The Lady in the Green Hat died, but Brett must live. But Catherine is Brett—an ennobled, a purified Brett, who can show us how to live, who must die before she forgets how to show us—deified into that brave and lovely creature whom men, if they have never found her, will always invent.

This apotheosis of bravery in the person of a woman is the more striking because Hemingway is still the same apparently blunt-minded writer of two-fisted words. He still has a horror of expressing delicate or noble sentiments, except obliquely.

> I did not say anything. I was always embarrassed by the words sacred, glorious, and sacrifice and the expression in vain. We had heard them . . . and had read them, on proclamations that were slapped up by billposters over other proclamations, now for a long time, and I had seen nothing sacred, and the things that were glorious had no glory and the sacrifices were like the stockyards at Chicago if nothing was done with the meat except to bury it. There were many words that you could not stand to hear and finally only the names of places had dignity.

And his prophecy of individual fate is, if anything, more brutally pessimistic than ever:

> The world breaks every one and afterward many are strong at the broken places. But those that will not break it kills. It kills the very good and the very gentle and the very brave impartially. If you are none of these you can be sure it will kill you too but there will be no special hurry.

He will not even call Catherine brave, except through the lips of her lover. Here he is describing how she acted in the first stages of labor:

> The pains came quite regularly, then slackened off. Catherine was very excited. When the pains were bad she called them good ones. When they started to fall off she was disappointed and ashamed.

Hemingway is not a realist. The billboards of the world, even as he writes about them, fade into something else: in place of the world to which we are accustomed, we see a land and a people of strong outlines, of conventionalized shadow; the people speak in a clipped and tacit language as stylized as their appearance. But Hemingway's report of reality is quite as valid as a realist's. The description of the War, in the first part of "A Farewell to Arms," is perhaps as good a description of war just behind the front as has been written; and a fresh report from a point of view as original as Hemingway's is an addition to experience. But this book is not essentially a war-story: it is a love-story. If love-stories mean nothing to you, gentle or hard-boiled reader, this is not your book.

The transition, indeed, from the comparative realism of the war scenes to the ideal reality of the idyll is not as effective as it might be. The meeting of the lovers after Henry's desertion from the army, and their escape into Switzerland, have not that ring of authenticity about them which from Hemingway we demand. We are accustomed to his apparent irrelevancies, which he knows how to use with such a strong and ironic effect, but the scene, for instance, between the lovers and Ferguson in the hotel at Stresa seems altogether too irrelevant, and has no ironic or dramatic value, but is merely an unwanted complication of the story. From this point until the time when the lovers are safely established in Switzerland, we feel a kind of uncertainty about everything that happens; we cannot quite believe in it. Why is it, then, that when our belief is reawakened, it grows with every page, until once more we are convinced, and passionately convinced, that we are hearing the truth?

I think it is because Hemingway, like every writer who

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has discovered in himself the secret of literature, has now invented the kind of ideal against which no man's heart is proof. In the conclusion of "A Farewell to Arms," he has transferred his action to a stage very far from realism, and to a plane which may be criticized as the dramatics of a sentimental dream. And it is a dream. Catherine Barkley is one of the impossibly beautiful characters of modern tragedy—the Tesses, the Alyoshas, the Myshkins—who could never have existed, who could not live even in our minds if it were not for our hearts. In that sentimentalism, that intimation of impossible immortality, poets and those who hear them are alike guilty.

Hemingway himself is doubtless a very different sort of man from the people pictured in his books: he may well have very different ideas about the real nature of life; but as long as books remain a communication between us, we must take them as we understand them and feel them to be. "Nothing ever happens to the brave." It is an ambiguous statement of belief, and its implications are sufficiently sinister, but its meaning is as clear and as simple as the faith it voices. It is a man's faith; and men have lived and died by much worse.

T. S. MATTHEWS.

The Tragic Era

The Tragic Era, The Revolution after Lincoln, by Claude G. Bowers. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 567 pages. $5.

CLAUDE BOWERS is a man of audacities. When he turns his pen to historical writing, he resists the temptation of taking some obscure character or little-known period for treatment, a device which a number of his contemporaries have found extremely profitable; instead, he deliberately stakes his claim on ground already seemingly well occupied by professional historians and biographers. This he did when he wrote his "Party Battles of the Jackson Period," and again when he wrote his "Jefferson and Hamilton." Each time he struck pay dirt; and the expectations of his publishers in regard to the present volume are indicated by the legend on the jacket, "First Printing One Hundred Thousand." Bowers differs from the so-called modern biographers in interesting himself in a whole group of colorful and contending personalities; and he differs from the social historians in seeing the group as so many separate individualities, masters of their own destinies, not mere human corks set bobbing by the ebb and flow of forces largely beyond their control or comprehension. The secret of his success does not lie in the undoubted thoroughness of his researches, for any doctoral candidate could equal or better him at that, but rather in his conception of his task, a conception which clearly sets him apart from the professional historian and as clearly accounts for his wide public backing. The Bowers formula is the result of a combination of Emerson's dictum, "There is properly no history, only biography," with Hilaire Belloc's prescription (which Bowers quotes) that "readable history is melodrama"—though melodrama is perhaps too harsh a characterization of the effect which Bowers seeks. Understood in this way Bowers should be conceded his place as the greatest living American practitioner of what for want of a better term may be called personal history. It is a form of historical writing which, along with great merits, has serious limitations. While on the one hand it lends itself to vivid and dramatic recital, on the other the treatment becomes almost necessarily episodic, the great impersonal tides in human affairs are neglected, and the "wholesome averages of life," lacking in dramatic appeal, receive no attention whatsoever.

Bowers' latest volume has all the merits and defects of the genre. He has written an extraordinarily interesting story of the Reconstruction years from 1865 to 1877, depicting the exciting struggles between President Johnson and the Radicals in Congress, the swashbuckling triumph of the latter, the rape of the political South by the Carpetbaggers, the bewildered gropings of the freedmen and the marchings of the Klansmen, closing with the final redemption of the white South after the disputed presidential election of 1876-1877. He has given us memorable characterizations of Andrew Johnson and Thaddeus Stevens, the two great opposing personalities during the first four years, and an equally memorable portraiture in the later period of the silent, well meaning Grant, surrounded by men who were neither silent nor well meaning. To relieve the evil scenes of intrigue and corruption the reader is given recurrent glimpses of brilliant Washington society at its gayest. It is the art of the motion picture applied to historiography. His style is excellently adapted to the swiftly moving narrative. The purist might quarrel with his frequent verbless sentences, with his occasional uncouth verbal inventions like "dynamitize," and perhaps also with his addiction to antique words like "albeit" and "withal"; but to borrow one of the author's own phrases, the net result is a "flowing fluency" which sweeps the reader breathlessly along from one thrilling climax to another. If the latter part of the volume is not as interesting as the earlier, the explanation lies in the fact that after a time the reader becomes surfeited with scandal, corruption and fraud. But this is not the author's fault; it is history's.

Comparison is inevitably invited to other treatments of the Reconstruction era. Indeed, the author challenges such comparison by occasional dark hints that the truth at last is being told after the partisan attempts of the professional historians these many years to justify the course of the Reconstruction Radicals. But after having read the historical works listed in his bibliography, Mr. Bowers must know how little warranted such innuendoes are. Even James Ford Rhodes, though guilty, as Bowers charges, of giving "currency to the utterly indefensible story that he [Andrew Johnson] was slovenly in attire," and believing furthermore that Johnson was drunk in Cleveland in 1866, drew Johnson the statesman in broad outlines not unlike Bowers'; and Rhodes's contemporaries and successors, Burgess, Dewitt, Dunning, Oberholtzer and notably Schouler (not to mention Johnson's recent biographers, Winston and Stryker), have given us a picture of the man which Bowers' volume fails to change in any essential respect. Were one seeking to attain novelty of interpretation, he would write a history of the times making out Johnson to be the sort of liar and blackguard that Thad Stevens and his ilk charged him with being. As for Grant's weaknesses, what historian has dealt gently with them? In regard to the lesser figures, no responsible writer has exceeded the acid characterizations of Professor Dunning, to whom, for example, Secretary of War Stanton's "amazing record of duplicity" suggested "the vagaries of an opium-eater."

Bowers' impatience with earlier historians may perhaps be illuminated by a single example. Referring to Johnson's speech in New York at the beginning of his ill-fated "swinging round the circle" in the fall of 1866, he re-

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marks: "It has not been fashionable to quote from the wise and patriotic speech he made there," and he proceeds to give some unexceptionable passages and no others. Rhodes alluded to the address as "a partisan, egotistical speech," while Dunning, probably believing other addresses on the tour more significant, omitted all mention of it. The speech itself (reprinted in McPherson's "Political History . . . during the Period of Reconstruction," pages 129-134) contained such passages as this:

> When you talk . . . about red-handed rebels and all that, who has fought these traitors and rebels with more constancy and determination than the individual now before you? Who has sacrificed or suffered more?

And later:

> I have filled every office in this Government. You may talk to me as you will, and slander—that foul whelp of sin—may subsidize, a mercenary press may traduce and vilify, mendacious and unprincipled writers may write and talk, but all of them cannot drive me from my purpose. What have I to gain? I repeat. From the position of the lowest alderman in your city to President of the United States, I have filled every office in the country.

Though the speech also contained much that was "wise and patriotic," these excerpts show that parts of it were undoubtedly "partisan and egotistical." Both Rhodes and Bowers told the truth about the speech, but neither told the whole truth, though Rhodes came nearer to it, since he reflected more accurately the contemporary opinion.

The other shortcomings of the volume are very largely bound up with the author's pursuit of history through personalities. It seems unfair to the unfortunate Grant to tell the story of his presidency without an account of the Treaty of Washington, the greatest diplomatic achievement of his administration and an enduring milestone in the history of Anglo-American relations. The reader is not steered carefully enough through the maze of Reconstruction laws and constitutional amendments; and the Fourteenth Amendment is discussed without any allusion to its future bearings on unregulated corporate development—a matter which Roscoe Conkling later asserted was in the minds of the committee which framed it. In his portrayal of the iron-willed and unscrupulous Stevens, the author overreaches himself, since he never explains why, when Military Reconstruction was enacted, the Senate, rather than Stevens's House caucus succeeded in working its will. Indeed, with all the blood-and-thunder talk of the Radicals in Congress and the lamentable misdeeds of the Carpetbaggers in the South, the reader would never realize from Bowers' volume that the process of Reconstruction was, as a matter of fact, exceptionally mild as such things go in history. The Radicals stopped short of the crowning blunders: they confiscated practically no enemy land and put no one to death for a political offense. Furthermore, as Allan Nevins pointed out in his "Emergence of Modern America," the progress of the South did not halt in the darkest years, for "a great part of the producing area had been little affected by the Reconstruction maladies." Even the much execrated black-and-tan state constitutions had the useful result of requiring the establishment of public school systems in the Southern states. When had the signal failure of so great a rebellion been attended by such light penalties for the conquered? It was this unexampled forbearance, indeed, which made possible the spiritual reconciliation of South and North within the lifetime of the generation which had waged the war—one of the miracles of modern history.

What Bowers means by the subtitle of his volume is not altogether clear. He apparently refers to the violent, ruthless, and often unconstitutional proceedings of the Radical Republicans who presided over the Reconstruction. The real "revolution after Lincoln" was, however, something different. It was the tremendous transformation of industry, mining, communication and agriculture which, within a few decades, completely changed the basis of American life. It may have been hastened but was not caused by the civil conflict and its results. It was more important in its consequences than either the war or the Reconstruction. And it is a story that yet remains to be written.

ARTHUR M. SCHLESINGER.

"Criticobiografiction"

Monks Are Monks, by George Jean Nathan. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 300 pages. $2.50.

THE first two sentences in this book reveal all of Mr. Nathan's faults of style and thought, at their worst. These faults are not always displayed in his writings, but they occur frequently enough to be deplored by those who, like myself, believe that Mr. Nathan is a gifted writer who has not always respected his gifts. At his best Mr. Nathan is extraordinarily percipient, clear-headed, analytical; he has exposed a greater variety of fallacies than has Mr. Mencken; he is a sound critic, erudite, interesting, and intelligent; and the breath of life is in his prose. At his worst, he is as we find him in these first two sentences.

The faults of style I speak of are bad syntax, redundancy, use of false similes and analogies, misapprehension of the meaning (and sometimes even the spelling) of words and, as he might put it, polysyllabophilia or esotericonomenclature. He has a colored man's and Percy Hammond's delight in long and unusual words.

The faults of his thought are expressed in an irrelevant and specious snobbery, failure to relate his parts of speech to common or even plausible experience, attempts at extravagant paradox which fail to come off, and a tendency to play the buffoon in circumstances which do not justify buffoonery.

Let us examine these first two sentences one by one. First: "Gilbert Hemingham, like most fattish, socially impotent gentlemen slightly past forty and as children deprived of the advantages of a governess, was in the habit of discoursing frequently and not without obvious satisfaction on the length of his fibula."

(1) I don't know whether Mr. Nathan meant the *as* in that sentence to be an adverb of time or a relative pronoun, or whether he made the common mistake of assuming that both *like* and *as* are prepositions. I submitted the sentence to several persons. They disagreed over the interpretation of it. Some held that Mr. Nathan had inserted an unnecessary *and* into the sentence and that, properly written, the sentence would read: "Gilbert Hemingham, like most fattish, socially impotent gentlemen slightly past forty (*who were*) deprived of the advantages of a governess as (or, *when they were*) children, was in the habit, etc." Others held that Mr. Nathan had introduced two similes into the sentence, thus: "Gilbert Hemingham, like most fattish, socially impotent gentlemen slightly past forty and like (or *as are*) children deprived of a governess, was, etc."

(2) Let us take the first interpretation of the sen-

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tence to be the correct one. The simile assumes that it is a recognized fact that certain men past forty are in the habit of talking often and boastingly of their fibulas—which certainly is not true. There are no men generally known to talk about the length of their shanks (and it would be more natural for them to talk about the length of their shanks than about their fibulas) or even about the length of their tibias. The tibia is the more important of the shank bones and the length of the fibula corresponds in every leg with the length of the tibia. What end did Mr. Nathan seek to gain by the use of that false simile and the use of the word *fibula*?

(3) I think I have read somewhere that the late Ward McAllister was "socially powerful," so I suppose Mr. Nathan is privileged to coin the expression "socially impotent." But he is justified in doing so only if he gives us some indication of what he means by it. He does not and we are left to the conclusion that it is merely a harsh-sounding and ugly synonym for "socially negligible" or "socially unimportant." So many millions of us are socially negligible without our being cut up about the fact that the expression has little force as a descriptive.

(4) When he writes "children deprived of the advantages of a governess," I feel that, in the interest of clarity, he might better have worded it, "children deprived of the discipline (or instruction) of a governess," because the children enjoy the advantages, not the nurse; but, syntax apart, the expression is an example of that specious snobbery which often mars Mr. Nathan's writings. I say "specious" snobbery, because there are forms of snobbery natural to the humblest people as well as to the most cultivated; they are unconscious displays of snobbery that are self-protective and inevitable; but Mr. Nathan's implication is that a child that has a governess acquires better manners than a child that is trained by its mother. That is the snobbery of cash money. It is cheap and blatant.

The second sentence reads: "The topic never seemed to tire him, in fact, the length of his fibula appeared in his mind to be at one with his belief in his own superiority to the common run of his fellows and in its true mark of him as a sovereign animal."

Because of the faulty syntax of that sentence, involving the use of the word *appeared,* it is not easy to guess what Mr. Nathan intended to say. He may mean, ". . . . the length of his fibula was to him evidence in support of his belief in his superiority to the common run of men," or ". . . . the length of his fibula appeared to be associated in his mind with his belief in his superiority, etc." or "his belief that a long fibula denotes the true mark of a sovereign animal was at one with his belief in his superiority to the common run of men." But whatever he intended to say, he has not said it in the sentence I have quoted.

Mr. Nathan's aversion to repeating a word leads him into extravagant synonyms. In this same first paragraph from which I have been quoting, the fibula becomes *osseous tissue;* and pride in ancestry becomes, first, *genealogical peacockery* and later *linear* (sic) *eminence.* Now, tissue cannot be osseous and *linear* is not a synonym for *lineal.* In the next paragraph, Hemingham's talk about his fibula becomes "Hemingham's tibiofibular brio."

Let me quote two more sentences and then I am done with Mr. Nathan's style. One of them reads: "There is a type of critic, currently *promiscuous* amongst us, whose chief delight lies in the isolation of various observations from their context." The italics are mine. What did Mr. Nathan mean when he wrote that word *promiscuous*? Did he mean *conspicuous, prominent, ubiquitous,* or doesn't he know what *promiscuous* means? There is a form of amnesia which causes people to say or write one word when they wish to use another that sounds vaguely like it. Sometimes Mr. Nathan writes as though he occasionally suffered from a mild attack of this ailment. Again, Mr. Nathan, in that second clause, really meant to write, "whose chief delight is to isolate various observations from their context," because his own context shows that he means that the critic likes to do the isolating and not merely to see the isolation that someone else has performed.

Lastly: "One can no more arbitrarily smouch a statement from its setting than one can genealogically smouch an egg from its hen. The critic who does so only proves himself a fool." Doesn't Mr. Nathan see that the second sentence flatly contradicts the first? He says that one *can't* do something and then says, in effect, that it is being done right along. Again, why *arbitrarily* and why *genealogically*? What, in the context, do those words mean? Are they, like the third element in the old conundrum, merely thrown in to make it harder? One can smouch an egg from a hen: I have done it; one has merely to put one's hand into a nest where there are eggs a hen has laid, grasp an egg and withdraw one's hand. But it is incontestably true that one "cannot genealogically smouch an egg from its hen." It is also incontestably true that one cannot orthographically swallow a maharaja through an escorial.

By exercising greater care in composition, Mr. Nathan could easily eliminate from his work such flaws as those I have mentioned. But I, as one who for many years has owed much to Mr. Nathan for the pleasure and stimulation I have derived from his writings, am beginning to wonder whether or not Mr. Nathan will ever be able to do anything about that split personality of his which has been responsible for his failure to develop, in any appreciable degree, during the past ten years. In Mr. Nathan we have on the one hand a serious student of life and esthetics, a brilliant mind quick to see the absurdity of certain ideas solemnly accepted by his critical colleagues, a man of profound intellectual integrity, and a courageous critic with a sound sense of values; and on the other hand we have the Broadway epicure prattling of rare wines and cordials, the comic writer relying for laughs upon references to the "sitspot," and the competent old-style wit reeling off yards and yards of epigrams in the vein of the low Nineties. And the one is constantly being defeated by the other.

"Monks Are Monks" was a source of real a me. I resented it in the same way that I ha a poor performance by a favorite actor, a p wherein the actor was shirking his work. Hi Nathan has collected the best of his pieces whic peared in magazines, edited them and made a b them. In "Monks Are Monks" he has colle magazine pieces as usual, but has used them a in a makeshift framework of narrative. The na counts the vain efforts of a young woman, with toward literary men, to lose her virginity to one Mr. Nathan presents us in turn with several caricatures of writers who spout George Jean Na to her by the hour but fail to oblige her. One is the mouthpiece for a sentence which runs to ov words in length.

Mr. Nathan calls this makeshift means of utili old magazine paragraphs a work of *criticobiografi* word he has evolved, he says, to describe a literary

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which is neither criticism, nor biography, nor fiction, but a combination of the three. Furthermore, we learn that "through the eyes of the central character we are presented with pictures of various conspicuous and representative characters in the American arts and of their philosophies and personal peculiarities."

We are presented with nothing of the kind. If, in permitting his book to be thus described on the jacket, Mr. Nathan is indulging in a hoax, he should be rebuked. If he believes that his book is as it is described, Nathan the critic has lost much of his sense of values. His caricatures of himself and Mencken in the figures, Morton and Norton, are faintly reminiscent of Rube Goldberg's "Mike and Ike, They Look Alike." It is curious, though, that even here he should permit Mr. Mencken to speak in the written style of George Jean Nathan. The experience of his heroine, says Mr. Nathan, taught her what was wrong with American literature . . . . Perhaps, perhaps.

BURTON RASCOE.

George Henry Boker

Sonnets, a Sequence on Profane Love, by George Henry Boker. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. 173 pages. $2.

Nydia: A Tragic Play, by George Henry Boker. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. 102 pages. $2.

IT IS far too early to expect anything like a fair criticism of the body of poetry written by Americans during the first one hundred and fifty years of the republic. No one has yet set it down, for example, that the bulk of Whitman's poetry simply isn't poetry, no matter how great it may be as "stuff"; and Poe's great "place" today is due perhaps more to a reaction from such criticism as Emerson's and Lowell's than to a really intelligent appreciation of his exceedingly fine art. Formerly great names have become merely pegs to hang gibes upon, and the very harmony of it all is the harmony of a flock of sheep. Lesser names have disappeared altogether under the weight of dead reputations, where they will safely wait for a later generation to revive them. Into this negation of criticism Professor Bradley of the University of Pennsylvania has had the courage to toss two volumes of newly discovered verse by
otten worthy of "those days"—though he seems to
rous over-praise, perhaps to confuse our faculties
nd to challenge a darker oblivion for his poet.
s a hard and dangerous word to use of any poet,
recently dead, and, as a poet, Boker has been con-
dead for some time. It is surely too bad to put
now, when he is helpless, a label which he so
ly missed during his life.
Boker had a considerable vogue, during the
ecades of the last century, as a lyric poet, and the
or a Soldier" quite steadily held its place in the
ies until the recent abolition of war made its sub-
llent to our more advanced minds. His sonnets
laced," by sound contemporary criticism, as "second
Longfellow's," among the Americans. With his
nd especially with "Francesca da Rimini," he
d something almost like fame. Perhaps he deserved
ue and his fame. Born in Philadelphia, graduated
Princeton, and with little, if any, of the moral
ness so necessary then to a poet's outfit, he escaped
reatness" which was thrust so heavily upon his New
nd predecessors and contemporaries. He did, to be sure, with all the rest and in friendly rivalry with Taylor and Stoddard, write a certain amount of "noble" verse—labored, high-falutin rhetoric with cracked echoes in it of romantic English masters; but it was decidedly not the nobleness that preached too long and prosily at Cambridge and Concord, nor was it the Sunday School opportunism that could ruin a good ballad or idyll with a "thanks to thee, for the lesson thou hast taught"; and he was incapable of lines like Taylor's immensely popular couplet:

> The noblest are the tenderest
> The loving are the daring,

which meant so much and mean so little.

No; one looks in vain through the "Collected Poems and Plays" of 1856 for excessive sensibility, or for the standardized morality which was to be so largely responsible for the cynical neglect of later generations. There are ballads, chiefly European in source; lyrics of a jaunty kind, never too seriously conceived or too creakingly contrived; and there are sonnets—the sonnets which were, and probably still are, "second only to Longfellow's." His poetry is *written;* but strange to say, it has an old-fashioned melody of its own, quite simple, but deftly set. Melancholy is as far to seek as morality. Even the "gay maiden" down at the mill, who came to no good end, laments her hard luck, it seems, rather than the loss of her virtue. There is something quite debonair about it all.

So it is not a surprise to read of Boker that during his college days he greatly admired the "courtly" poets of the seventeenth century. He himself gives, in an earlier poem, not reprinted, a list of these: Etherege, Dorset, Buckingham, "licentious Rochester," Sedley, Suckling: surely a strange enough array of poets to find on an undergraduate's shelves (and in his mind) in the Nassau Hall of the years 1838-1842! He does not borrow from them, nor sedulously ape them, but it is much in their spirit that he touches his lute, or whatever was the instrument proper to the occasion. There is no sound of the American eagle. He resented violently the suggestion that, as an American poet, he was chained to American subjects. "Nature" plays no part in his verse. The peewit, the chinquapin, the chickadee, the katydid, offer no internal evidence as to this man's nationality, nor is there any scent of sassafras nor sheen of sumach between the covers of his volumes. If the lark sings in "Anne Boleyn" or the nightingale in "Francesca da Rimini," it is not done in the way of nature, but supernaturally, as it might have been suggested by setting or properties. There is precious little here of what was later to be known as bunk.

But even dearer to his soul than the "courtly" poets were the Elizabethan playwrights, and there lay his great ambition—to be second to no one, not even Longfellow, among the Americans. And there is nothing debonair in his efforts as a dramatist. This is all serious—even more serious than the "noble" poetry of his odes. It is written that he "spouted" long passages of Shakespeare and Marlowe and the rest to his admiring fellow students at Princeton; and the expected "echoes" ring clearly enough in the plays written very soon after his graduation. "She could read and was a great diviner, with a beard that would make two of yours. She told fortunes by the way a cat jumped or a sparrow flew." So runs his prose, which is not "bad going" for a boy in the days before the god of boy-wonders was born. Occasionally the verse runs too close to the original, as

> And sometimes in the dead and hush of night. . . .

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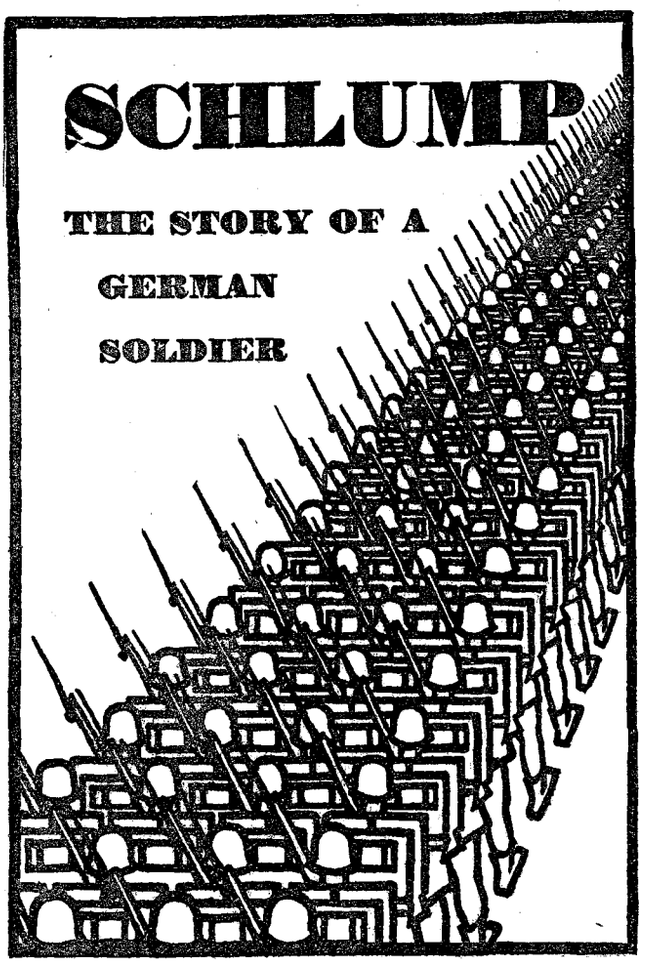

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ertheless these plays, "Calaynos," "Anne Boleyn," r de Guzman" are not mere pinchbeck and pastiche. are carefully considered, consistently built up and lly concluded; and the characters Calvinistically "live hove and have their being" in their own world, the d of poetic drama. Finally, in "Francesca da Rimini," echoes have been muted: the dramatist has got himself yle of his own, and, however inferior it may be as ry, as a play it seems to me better than any "poetic" na of the great Victorians. Not high praise, perhaps. But "Francesca da Rimini," compared with other American plays of that time, almost justifies Professor Bradley in his otherwise extravagant judgment.

The Civil War turned Boker, for the occasion, into a writer of patriotic verse, and the "Poems of the War" of 1867 contains the "Dirge" and the "Black Regiment" and "Cavalry Sheridan," all of which were popular for the next decade. But he became dissatisfied with his career as a dramatist—*in fact, with the whole literary business*—and published only two volumes during the last twenty years of his life. Under President Grant he became one of those *literary diplomats with whom our politicians were wont* to emphasize from time to time the illiteracy of the rest. From Constantinople he moved on to Petersburg, finally returning to Philadelphia, the diplomat rather than the poet, a figure in "society" rather than in literature. Then —1890—he died, and seemingly there was an end of him. The numerous books on American literature give him short shrift—Barrett Wendell's none at all. The plays, in spite of revivals, went the way of all poetic drama; the sonnets were left out of the newer anthologies (although Mr. S printed two of them a year or so ago in the London Mercury); only the "Dirge" was left sonorously to carry on his name to those of the younger generations whose taste in poetry runs to "pre-war stuff." Philadelphia, basking in the patronage of Walt Whitman, who occasionally crossed the Camden ferry, but did not celebrate it in song, forgot Boker and his "Plays and Poems." Princeton, all ears for her politicians and parsons, had, to all intents and purposes, never heard of her poet.

Boker's earlier volumes are more or less rarities, long out of print. While the Cary sisters and Lucy Larcom, Taylor and Trowbridge, were being "garnered" into "Household" or other editions, he remained a rank outsider, uncollected, unconsidered, and, probably for his lack of moral tone, "unaneled." And now, forty years after his death, come these two new volumes of his verse—a book of sonnets and a play, part of a great "find" by Professor Bradley when he was gathering material for his recent excellent "Life" of Boker. They have been reverently prepared for publication and are enthusiastically prefaced and introduced—too reverently, too enthusiastically, indeed, for the profane and cynical age in which we life. The ghost of irony (which died with Anatole France) still struts about among us, with a fiendish hunger for phrases like Professor Bradley's. And, in truth, there is a suggestion of a high-toned Hollywood about them. They might serve well enough to introduce a poet forgotten since 1690, but for one forgotten since only 1890 they smack of unreality. With his preliminary flourish, his "press," he handicaps the serious critic, who feels let down when the show begins. We have discovered that there was no greatness before our own; and phrases like a "major work" are apt to seem ridiculous even when applied to a real major, while to speak of the "greatest of Boker's works" is to date and damn Boker.

For with the best will in the world to solidify Professor Bradley's enthusiasm into sober statement, I can find nothing "great" in "Nydia," this readable, admirable dramatization of the central situation in the "Last Days of Pompeii." The language may owe nothing, as Professor Bradley says, to the "euphuistic elegance" of Lord Lytton. "Thous" and "thees" and second person singulars are pleasantly absent. The style is generally compact and simple—at times almost colloquial. But it is not a great style, and poetic drama needs at least the excuse of a style. Such passages as this:

> My own, I hoped
> To give this lovely evening to ourselves.
> See how the moonlight glimmers on the bay
> Clinging to every wavelet's little crest
> As though she loved to make it beautiful. . .

(Sit, Jessica!) and

> Gladly, gladly
> Would I change places with my murdered friend
> To give him back to life. . . .

are neither fish, flesh, nor good red poetry; and in Glaucus's final speech:

> Lift her with reverence. Her dust must lie
> Beneath the sunshine of her native land.
> She was compounded of the flowers she loved. . . .

is it not there, once more, we hear the young George Boker who "spouted" the Elizabethans to appreciative friends in his room in Nassau Hall, *circa* 1840? I know I am unfair to the poet, for the lines read well, and, personally, I am no stickler against echoes and clichés; but Professor Bradley has been unfair to begin with, with his easy "greatest" challenging the gods themselves. The "play" is another matter. Whether Laurence Barrett could have made it "go"—or not—I can't presume to say; but surely it would need a fairly "old-time" set to put it on now.

But it is the enormous cycle of three hundred and thirteen sonnet which suffers most from such enthusiastic praise. It is here our judgment must be nicer in deciding between major and minor—if we are using such terms at all. For the sonnets are better poetry than the play is; they are uniquely frank "among the Americans" of the reticent century; they are of excellent form; they are autobiographical with the added aroma of scandal, courtly scandal; but they do not seem to me "major" for all that. There are too many words for the emotion; too many sonnets for the fable, and as it is definitely the fable that most of the time counts, the fable should not be lost in uninspired reflection. On the other hand, many of them follow too closely upon the experience. The memories are too vivid for imagination to work freely with them. Too often the diction breaks down under the necessity of immediate use. And, finally, there is little molding of emo-

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tion and fable and reflection into perfect phrase, which is the business of the great sonnet, be it amorous or pious or merely political.

In these sonnets, Boker celebrates his "illicit" love-affairs, three of them on end, beginning, as Professor Bradley points out, with the lady who had already been celebrated in the sonnets of 1856—second only to Longfellow's! It's the "private life of our own dear Queen" as compared with Cleopatra's, all over again! Boston had published the "Plays and Poems" in 1856. What Boston then would have done with this book teases us out of thought. American poetry had suffered long under Poe's scandal of drunkenness; was soon to suffer more acutely under Whitman's incredible vices. This "courtly" *scandale* (no vulgar scandal), this belated affair of the Restoration, would have been too much for Poetry, whose High Court was still, it must be remembered, in Boston, with excursions to the suburbs.

From his first meeting with the lady of the first and by far the longest of the "affairs," when he stood "abashed" (his own word) in her presence, we follow the fears and fancies, the reverence and vague desires of youth, until passion grows too strong for propriety and physical consummation becomes the only end. Beatrice and Laura figure amiably in later sonnets, but these lines were written of no dream-lady, no shadow-love, no symbol:

> If she should give me all I ask of her,
> The virgin-treasure of her modest love,
> If lip to lip in eager frenzy clove,
> And limb with limb should palpitate and stir
> In that wild struggle. . . .

And it was not written by callow youth, blatant over new sensations, nor by some sexless expert in sensuality. It is fairly robust, undisguised, of the days before Freud. It antedates the "Fleshly School of Poetry" by a pious decade. And six (too many) sonnets further on, there is no longer an "if" in the way:

> O, I have touched the blazing crown of bliss. . .
> Yes, I have charter, under Jove's own seal,
> To play the madman, crazed with mere delight;
> For my ecstatic days before me wheel
> Like linked Bacchantes. . . .

It must be remembered that there was a Gemma to this very different Beatrice!

On several occasions the poet deplores separation from his lady. Prying eyes and malicious tongues were busy. The lady fled, and the poet became inconsistent. He speaks of "sin," his sin, in much the tone of the gay maiden at the mill, but praises his lady's chastity above the chastity of those who have never sinned. And this in Philadelphia, *Anno Domini* 1860, or thereabouts! He plays sentimentally with the fear of the lady's death; he protests when she denounces his love as merely physical, and naïvely gives himself away in the very terms of his protest. There are literary sonnets, wherein Greek deities participate, or Dante and Petrarch are summoned from the Deep. He writes of his "art," of his lute—of the latter once, to this grim purpose:

> If sorry music on this lute were played,
> And someone told you Cleopatra's skull
> Was fashioned to this chamber, round and full,
> And this long neck of Helen's thigh was made;
> Each key was graven, and each fret inlaid
> From bones of beauties, whose caress could lull
> The Grecian madman or the Tudor bull,
> And all these strings were Rosamund's golden braid. . . .

I lose my balance over that, and hold up my hands. *Could* any other American have done that in the 1860's—and *would he if he could*?

The first affair lasts through fifteen years and two hundred and twenty-eight sonnets, but long before that "things" have begun to change, until we come to "a thing we once called love." It is sonnet two hundred and twenty-nine, carefully dated, March 21, 1867.

> And all thy praise was blurred with one great blame,
> And all thy beauty was a snare to dread,
> And all of love that lasted was its shame.

We have followed him through many years and many sonnets, and this is as near as he comes to Philosophy—in spite of much philosophizing. I turn to that other sonnet which signalizes the end of a love:

> Thus piteously Love closed what he begat. . . .

which had to do with "two rapid falcons in a snare condemned to do the flitting of a bat. . ." Boker's is a good sonnet, but if we say "great" we lack praise for the other.

The other affairs are briefer both in time and in sonnets. The second lady was obviously a "transient," and the poet does little more than catalogue her physical charms—her eyes, her "classic" brow, her hair. . . . Even here the poet (now also a diplomat) would eat his cake and have it, too. . .

> If it be sin as rigid men aver
> To love as we have loved, above the law
> That sanctions living

he begins one sonnet, and later comes back upon himself with:

> I will not have our holy love profaned
> By that untruth which slanders as impure
> The rites we keep. . .

It is only fair to note that this is dated 1871. The lover is forty-eight, the lady a lady of Paris. But ten years later he writes of a third lady:

> I bend and kiss thee: 'tis a little thing;
> Thousands have passed between us, and God grant
> That nectorous sip our lips may never want. . . .

It is time to cry "tut" to this wayward Victorian. The last sonnet of all is dated February 26, 1887.

It is a remarkable volume, and Professor Bradley has done his work so well that in the end I almost agree with him. But not quite. I wish the later loves away; I wish there had been less of all of it. Let Philadelphia, the older lot, simmer a while over this age-old scandal. Let Princeton judge him—teleologically. This will take half a century. Then let us have our "complete" Boker, all in handsome volumes like these, when we no longer have the bunk of our present debunkers to obscure our insight. Then perhaps we can put Boker where he really belongs, grant him his "considerable reputation" as a lyric poet, his little less than fame as a dramatist. But I fear that as a sonneteer we dare not any longer compare him with the "pure and beneficent" Longfellow.

F. C. Macdonald.

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As Universes Go

The Universe around Us, by Sir James Jeans. New York: The Macmillan Company. 331 pages. $4.50.

PLATO, in picturing human ignorance, describes a cavern in which captives are fettered in such a way that they can see only a wall, upon which the shadows of men and animals are projected by a distant fire. The difficulties that men in such a situation would encounter in formulating a conception of the world beyond the cavern are comparable to the difficulties that beset the scientist in his attempt to form a picture of the universe which shall be self-consistent and complete. The shadows on his walls bear an even fainter resemblance to their prototypes, and space and time collaborate to obscure their significance. Only tireless perseverance and inexhaustible ingenuity can serve to reconstruct scientific reality from the shadow-show of appearance. And the same danger threatens both the scientist and Plato's captives: that the result of their thought and investigation may be merely a science of shadows—or meter readings—with no ascertainable relationship to ultimate reality.

An increasing fear that this may be true has been noticeable recently among certain scientists. It seems to trouble them, despite the fact that science has formally renounced the attempt to describe ultimate reality and is supposedly confining itself to an attempt at a self-consistent interpretation of meter-readings.

Probably it is not in their roles as scientists that this doubt haunts them, but in their self-appointed task as philosophers. It is, perhaps, natural that the scientist, whose specialized knowledge is so much more extensive than that of other men, should consider himself best fitted to philosophize. But the result is seldom very convincing. Eddington in "The Nature of the Physical World" interspersed his brilliant exposition of modern physics with fragments of a half-dozen philosophical positions before finally and amazingly going Quaker.

Sir James Jeans is much more cautious in his excursions into metaphysics. He makes no attempt to deduce free-will from the vagaries of quanta, and he is scrupulous in warning the reader of the tentative and unsupported nature of such conjectures as he does give. Here are his speculations about the meaning and place of life in the universe:

> We can only guess at the meaning of this life which, to all appearances, is so rare. Is it the final climax towards which the whole creation moves, for which millions of millions of years of transformation of matter in uninhabited stars and nebulæ, and of the waste of radiation in desert space, have been only an incredibly extravagant preparation? Or is it a mere accidental and possibly quite unimportant by-product of natural processes, which have some other and more stupendous end in view? Or, to glance at a still more modest line of thought, must we regard it as something in the nature of a disease, which affects matter in its old age when it has lost the high temperature and capacity for generating high frequency radiation with which younger and more vigorous matter would at once destroy life? Or, throwing humility aside, shall we venture to imagine that it is the only reality, which creates, instead of being created by, the colossal masses of the stars and nebulæ and the almost inconceivably long vistas of astronomical time?

Here, certainly, is wide enough choice to suit everyone. But despite Sir James's diffidence in giving his own view, one feels throughout the book a certain air of surprise at not detecting God's finger on the needle of the meter.

The professional scientist turned amateur philosopher is a disquieting sight. There seems to be an established tradition, however, that this must be a part of every popular book on science. No doubt it is a legacy from the last century. The price, however, is a small one to pay for non-technical books from the pens of men who can speak for science with authority. No one would hesitate to trade the collected works of a hundred second-class popularizers of second-hand knowledge for one chapter by Eddington or Jeans.

"The Universe around Us" is even more stirring to the imagination than Eddington's "The Nature of the Physical World," and it is an easier book for the layman. No attempt is made to explain in detail the more recondite aspects of astronomy. The descriptions given of the Einstein Theory and Schrödinger's wave theory of the electron are models of lucidity and are nicely measured to the intelligence of the reader who has no specialized knowledge.

By adhering to this method throughout, Jeans has managed to give an amazingly complete picture of the universe as it appears to the astronomer, without in any way straining his reader's attention. Of course, more than astronomy enters into it: physics, geology, chemistry and pure mathematics each contributes its share. Whenever possible, debatable questions have been approached from an historical point of view, so that the book moves forward like a story.

And it is an exciting story that Jeans has to tell. It is the account of an exploration and survey of the universe undertaken by creatures confined to the periphery of an insignificant satellite which dances attendance upon a very undistinguished star. It is the story of a process of patient measuring pushed farther and farther into space until the magnitudes involved have ceased to have any possible meaning in human terms. Indeed, the very model described by Jeans—in which the earth's orbit is reduced to the size of a pinhead—becomes unimaginable, for it would have to extend over four million miles in order to include, on this scale, all the known stars and nebulæ. That would represent a distance of 140 million light years. From an astronomical viewpoint, this is the picture we get:

> For all but a 500th part of its long journey, the light by which we see this remotest of visible nebulæ traveled towards an earth uninhabited by man. Just as it was about to arrive, life sprang into being on the earth and built telescopes to receive it.

But that by no means represents the entire extent of the universe. If Einstein's original theory is right, it represents only about one part in 1,000,000,000. Should we ever build telescopes large enough to show us our sun in the midnight zenith—as on Einstein's theory is possible—we shall be looking at light that left the sun about 500,000 million years ago—ages before that wandering star which is the anonymous sire of the earth passed close to the sun and fathered her brood of planets.

Perhaps the most interesting and certainly the most novel parts of the book are those in which Jeans describes the findings in the field in which he is preëminent—that of mathematical analysis. He tells how equipartition of energy, a theory invented to explain the behavior of gases, has proved useful in determining the ages of binary stars; how an investigation of the inherent stability of stars of various

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sizes and temperatures has shown the reason for the absence of stars in certain sections of the Russel diagram; and how, in a dozen other ways, this instrument has proved its worth.

Jeans is emphatic in denying that there is evidence of cyclic birth and decay of stars. Stars, to be sure, are still being born in some of the nebulæ, but the matter in them is about the same age as all the matter in the universe. The stars are contemporaries moving along a common path from creation to extinction. Jeans sees no escape from the second law of thermodynamics. The universe is running down, and when the last quantum of energy has reached its state of minimum availability nothing but outside intervention could start the wheels going again. But that day is a distant one. If Jeans is right in his conjectures about the probable future of the earth, we are living in the very early dawn of civilization, with a future before us comparable, not to the past age of man, but to the total past age of the earth.

DENVER LINDLEY.

Hero of Two Worlds

La Fayette, by Brand Whitlock. New York: D. Appleton and Company. Two vols. 972 pages. $10.

THE MARQUIS de La Fayette is at last coming into his own. Once a great hero in both France and America, his fame steadily diminished until the World War. Overpraise in this country brought its natural reaction, and the glorification of the French Revolution abroad tended to belittle the reputation of a Frenchman who for good and sufficient reasons tried to escape into voluntary exile in 1792.

General Pershing with his laconic "La Fayette, we are here" may be said to mark the turning of the tide, at least as far as this country is concerned. Within a year and a half, two biographies of La Fayette have been published, both excellent. In 1928 Mr. Sedgwick gave us a sympathetic and well balanced study of the eighteenth-century general, and this year Mr. Whitlock, at greater length but with equal charm, has written an exhaustive and well-nigh definitive biography.

La Fayette was not a brilliant man. His innumerable portraits show that well enough, and his career is final proof. He was vain, ostentatious, and too much given to virtue. Mr. Mencken and Mr. Strachey would not care for him. Historians in general have sneered at him. Mr. Belloc has been quite nasty to the poor gentleman, and Mr. Belloc knows how to be nasty. Even that old patriarch of American historical criticism, Morse Stephens writes of La Fayette as a kind of human peacock, unstable in intellect and futile in action. It is refreshing, therefore, to find a more just and true appraisal of one who did his best not only to win our Revolutionary War but also to keep his own country on a steady and moderate course during the great revolution within her borders.

La Fayette belongs to European history rather than to American. His work in this country was admirably done, but from a military point of view his services to the United States did not exceed those of Von Steuben, the Prussian, or Kosciuszko, the Pole. His career did not reach its climax until 1789. It was La Fayette, then, rather than Mirabeau, who held the reins of authority as the French monarchy slid to destruction. He was the dashing soldier, the liberal noble who espoused the popular cause, the commandant of the national guard, the guardian of the new liberties, "the hero of two worlds." Three years later he was in an Austrian prison, hated alike by Jacobin and *émigré,* and soon forgotten by both.

The reasons for his fall are numerous. The queen would not be saved by the ex-nobleman, La Fayette. She hated him as only a woman could. He in turn hated the dissolute Mirabeau. He would not compound with knavery. He was too simple and too honest to play the trickster and to match plot with counterplot and cunning intrigue. He did not know how to deal with men. Traces of the old regime still could be smelt upon him. They could not be shed like titles of nobility. He remained, despite his clothes, *de* La Fayette. These are a few of the causes for his failure.

He did try manfully to enforce "the Washington formula of liberty within the law," and possibly he might have won against all odds, had not the inept policy of his sovereign ruined all possibility of a peaceful settlement. He fled from France, but not to join the *émigrés.* His army would not march on Paris to rescue Louis from the mob. If he remained with it, his own neck would soon be severed. To escape to England seemed the one alternative. The Austrians got him and put him in prison until he returned to France, a private citizen under Bonaparte. And such he stayed until the July revolution placed him in momentary power. The tragi-comedy of 1830 was quickly played, with La Fayette in the leading role. Once more he failed, hoodwinked as ever by the worldly-wise, this time by pragmatic bankers rather than by pragmatic Jacobins.

Judged by external standards of success, there is not much to say for La Fayette. But there are other standards more important which the historian is apt to disregard. Weighed in their balance, the general is not merely a quixotic knight-errant. In defeat he was more of a hero than at the Yorktown surrender. He took the ignominious road, knowing what men would say. He would fight neither against the revolution nor for it. He would neither support Bonaparte nor join in cabals against him. Instead, he calmly waited fifteen years for the Napoleonic storms to spend their force. La Fayette became a practising pacifist. One wonders if he was not intelligent in so doing?

Historians will note in sorrow an entire absence of footnotes in these two volumes. They will also justly criticize the author for failing to discuss at greater length the relations of La Fayette to the court, to Mirabeau and to the Jacobins.

WALTER PHELPS HALL.

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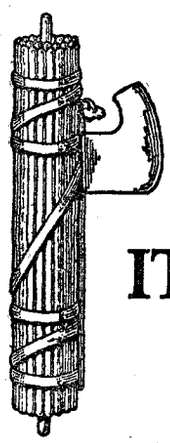

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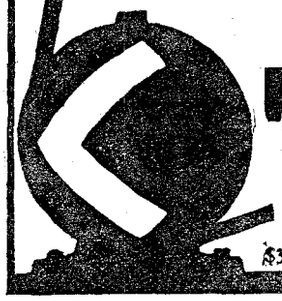

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